

# **Analysis of the Tarot of Metamorphosis**

1<sup>st</sup> Edition

Marley Sexton

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## Introduction

Thank you for reading, I'll keep this introduction short. This book is intended to be a companion to the Tarot of Metamorphosis, taken from an amateur perspective. During the course of this work I will analyse and critique every card in the deck and, hopefully, provide you with an alternate perspective on what each card means. Furthermore, I hope that the revelations contained within will aid in helping to read traditional decks. The more knowledge the better, after all.

For the duration of this text I stress that the interpretations are just that: interpretations. They are not set in stone and I encourage the reader to explore them with their own mind and use their own intuition to guide them to a proper meaning. These have come from my intuition and, likewise, the reader should use theirs. I hope you enjoy reading and from that we'll jump right into the Major Arcana.

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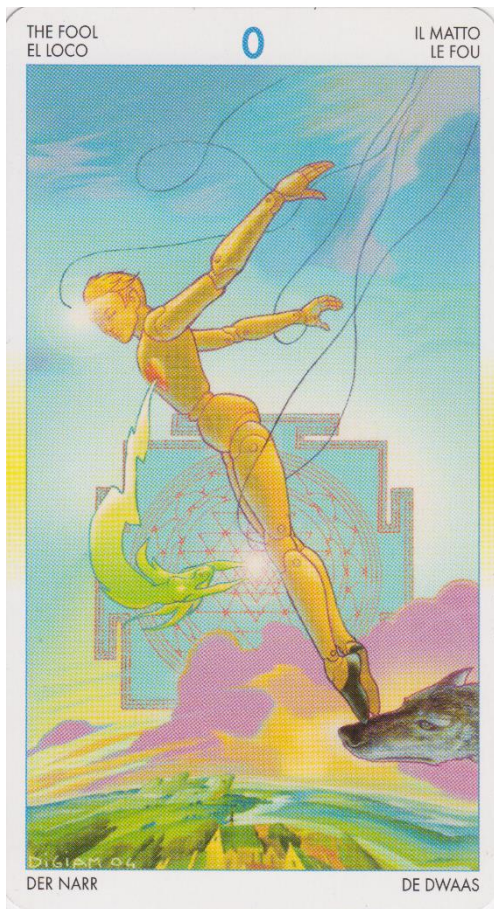
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# Major Arcana

## 0 - The Fool



*“The Metamorphoses of Vision. The end is the beginning. The Fool bears a new view, so different from the usual that it seems irrational. You are entering a phase where you can let go of the wealth of previous experiences that is now useless. You have a great opportunity for a new metamorphosis.”*

### The Fool's Journey

The beginning and the end. The Fool launches into a new phase of his life. He is born again, to put another way.

He sets out on a new path, carefree and wild. With his trusty companion who seeks nothing but to please his master he goes out into the world and looks for new experiences and adventures.

As a child, he is naïve and immature. He is, in a word, a Fool. Someone who knows little and has much to learn. With a little bit of encouragement, though, and much time, he will find himself and mature.

### Meaning

The Fool card first and foremost signifies the start of a new journey. He is unwisely flailing into the sky off the nose of his companion. He is, however, like the questioner whom he represents, in possession of a strong spirit. From his heart bursts free a golden sprite indicating passion and perhaps even hinting at the strength of his character.

Whatever it is in the questioner's life that they are beginning, or planning to start, this card is indicative of, well,

foolishness. They should understand that the road ahead of them is long and dangerous, and they are stepping into a new world in which they are innocent and ignorant. Whether it is starting a new hobby, a new job, or a new relationship, the questioner should be cautioned not to become too arrogant or overconfident in their abilities, at least until they have truly learned more about their role in the world. If they succumb to such then, like the fool pictured, they will throw themselves off the metaphorical cliff – ending their journey before it has even begun.

They are, in a word, childlike. This is not necessarily a negative thing, however. The world around them naturally entralls a child. They have a belief that the earth is one of infinite possibilities. Likewise, the questioner - the Fool at the very beginning of their journey - likely has a mind full of ideas and potential passions waiting to be brought out into the open. They should be encouraged to do so, to follow their dreams. A warning should be given, however, and that is that a long journey lie ahead of them should they wish to accomplish everything they desire.

On top of this, this card can also represent the death of an old way of thinking, and the old way of doing things. It can be indicative of someone who has a strong desire to start fresh and go back to square one. If this is the case, then it should be seen as a fantastic opportunity to grow and develop as a human being, rather than being seen as a failure of the previous route. They should adapt and modify what they've learned into their new schemes and launch headlong into it. They need to be aware, though, they are once again a Fool - a child - learning to walk and talk once more. Don't fall, don't trip, and above all, they should bring others with them so that they can experience the wondrous joy of a new world too.

## I – The Magician



*“The first Metamorphosis. The Magician transforms the world with his illusions, casting on it the images of his intense will. The risk is being deceived by his imagination.*

*You hold in your hands the power of concentrating all energies for transformation.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Having set out on the road careful and ready to engage with the world, the Fool

stumbles across a wise old magician practicing his craft. Self-confident and sanguine the Fool enquires “Does knowledge breed happiness?”

“Not by itself” replies the Magician, weaving his illusion all the while. “Thoughts are just the beginning. Turning those ideas into action is what produces bliss”.

The Fool stood in amazement for a moment as he watched the Magician create raw, powerful, physical energy from nothing more than the sheer will to do so.

“The mind is powerful” added the Magician, “let your intuition guide you.”

### Meaning

This card illustrates a thickly robed magician, a mage, spewing ball of pure unsaddled energy from the palms of his hands. Every construction imaginable can be born from his actions, everything he can even begin to conceptualize he can form from the air.

Regarding the Fool’s journey, this is the earliest of early card. It indicates action and potential. The Magician can use his mind alone – from just his willpower

and self-discipline – to create anything. This is, therefore, a card about possibilities. Whereas the Fool itself signifies the start of an unknown journey, one where there are infinite capabilities and limitless ideas, the Magician heralds the start of real determined action to create a new life from, essentially, nothing – just as the Magician concocts spells.

In terms of the questioner, this card is indicative of someone who has a rough idea of what they want to do and where they want to go, but who are perhaps discouraged with the lack of success thus far. They should be encouraged that the Magician did not become a master of illusion through innate talent overnight, but instead, it would have been a long and arduous journey which required determination and dedication to their art. Likewise the questioner, despite perhaps being at the very beginning of some trip, should be aware that only through resolute action can anything be achieved. Life, in a way, isn't going to hand them what they desire on a plate. They have to turn those ideas, those thoughts, and desires, into constructive action to move forward.

There is a warning associated with this card, however, and that comes from the revelation that a mind is a powerful object, perhaps one of the most powerful things in the universe. The Magician has an incredible ability, but he looks reckless and brash. Therefore, although the questioner has the potential to become whatever they wish to be, they should not get too carried away with their imagination, lest they become an uncontrollable behemoth of evil or be painfully disappointed. They should, despite maybe wanting the world in their hands, work through their ideas in a slow and methodical manner. By doing so they'll not only learn more from the process, but they can control the results of their behaviour with ease.

All in all, however, this is a card that promotes decisive action. For the questioner, it is about following their passions and forming constructive thoughts, which they can act on, from their limitless desires.



## II - The High Priestess



*"The metamorphosis of the Imagination. The High Priestess holds all evolutionary metamorphoses. The Key for entering her kingdom is simply knowing how to imagine them. The masks of the unconscious are changeable."*

### The Fool's Journey

After meeting with the Magician the Fool continues on his way, knowing that

he needs to act on his ideas with determination to achieve his goals.

After a short while, he comes across a grand white temple where on an ivory throne sits a beautiful and holy High Priestess. Behind her rests a wooden door. Unlike the Magician, who was spewing spells and weaving illusions, the High Priestess sits calmly and quietly, deep in thought.

She says nothing, yet the Fool knows she has a lot to tell from the gentle but mysterious air that surrounds her. "What can I do?" asks the Fool.

Serenely she stands up and hands the Fool a book bound in stone. He opens it and is surprised to see the pages blank. "What can this teach me?" questions the Fool. The High Priestess says nothing and the Fool stands in wonder. He queries if there is something he does not know, and then it comes to him by way of his intuition. He knows nothing. His story has yet to be told, and his knowledge is still lacking. With that revelation the Fool leaves, but he knows he shall return in the future. When he does, the High Priestess will have perhaps more to say.

### Meaning

This is a card about understanding your capabilities. Filled with energy and enthusiasm from the lessons learned from the Magician, the High Priestess teaches us to walk our paths with care and consideration. Action that is not preceded by rational thought is dangerous and, in a way, foolish.

The High Priestess also represents decisions. Her crown contains the images of numerous living beings, which represents – once again – the many different paths one can take, the many different individuals the Fool can become. Regarding the questioner, this can represent that they have reached a crossroad where action is required, but one in which the consequences of an incorrect decision are dire. They do not want to go charging in without thought, as the Magician would imply, else they may later regret it.

In this scenario, the High Priestess represents the psychological or spiritual side to problems. They should, therefore, attempt to discover more about what they do not know - what the blank pages should represent – so that they can subsequently make a decision.

Furthermore, it is a card about understanding the limitations of the mind. While the Magician emphasised the power of the mind, it nonetheless promotes egotistical, overly self-confident behaviour. The calm and proud High Priestess is more indicative of someone who understands that they do not know everything. In terms of the Fool's journey, it is about reaching a stage where you cannot proceed down the chosen path without first taking the time to learn more. It is about developing the psyche into something which is even stronger than it was previously. In other words, knowledge is power, and as the Magician would indicate, power is the key to successful action.

So what does this all mean for the questioner? Well, it merely suggests that there is something in their life that they are unsure about perhaps due to a lack of knowledge or understanding. The key to resolving the issue is to make an effort to discover more. Without doing so, they will be walking blind through life, without a real purpose or goal. To fill the book, then, they first need to start experiencing and weaving tales.



### III – The Empress



*“The Metamorphoses of Mother Earth. The Mother Goddess makes every creative transformation possible. Let yourself be transported by the creative flow of Mother Earth and understand that the darkness is simply the cocoon that contains the potential of light.”*

#### The Fool's Journey

With the knowledge that action is necessary to achieve change, and the knowledge that an underdeveloped,

inexperienced mind has its limitations, the Fool embarks to seek out what he knows not.

He, however, looks ahead of him. Illuminated by the sun the lush green earth stretches on for miles. Through rivers and over mountains he sees he must traverse. It is a long journey, but as the Magician taught him, it starts with the desire to take the first step. He also knows that there will be many more strides to follow, and, as the High Priestess implied, there will be many as of yet undiscovered perils laid in wait for him. He knows he is not almighty, but he also knows he is not weak. He thus begins his travels.

#### Meaning

This is primarily a card about a journey. Like the two individuals Illustrated, who require extreme patience and perseverance to overcome the landscape, the questioner is likely faced with what seems like an insurmountable task. The advice this card offers is simply “persistence”.

The journey will not be easy, whatever it concerns, but through their travels, the questioner, as the Fool, will learn much

about themselves and others. Only through experience can we, as humans, grow psychologically and spiritually.

The earth pictured also represents the endless possibilities that await them, much like the proceeding cards. The same thing never happens twice and it is likely that during the questioner's journey they may discover or encounter problems they never even considered, but overcoming these with action and rationality is, of course, just part of their epic. Even if such occurrences are distressing this card suggests that it will nonetheless be beneficial for the psyche. Mother Earth, Nature, will gently guide them through whatever happens.

All in all, the mountains and rivers illustrated, the wild and untamed terrain, represent that the Fool not only has a long way left to go on his journey but that it will be full of difficulties and strife. To the questioner, this may seem intensely negative or even frightening, but it should be noted that it is simply part of life. Yes, it will not be pleasant, and no they will not enjoy it, but in order to mature, they need to face unpredictable dilemmas head on.

Furthermore, interlaced with the rivers and mountains are lush landscape adorned with an endless array of beautiful flowers and trees. This informs us that the Fool's journey despite being full of moments of animosity is also full of moments of ecstasy. Without passing through such troubles the happiness that Mother Earth brings can't be experienced. Immobility breeds apathy.

As the Magician implied, action is greater than no action. As the High Priestess suggested, knowledge is better than no knowledge. Simply sitting pretty and doing little writes nothing in the pages of the book of their life. They suffer no pain, but they also experience no joy. The real question, then, is it worth it? This card suggests that perhaps it is, but it is ultimately up to the questioner to decide whether to proceed.

To use an example, this card can represent relationships, in relation to the couple pictured. It can indicate that it will not always be smooth sailing. However, any difficulties experienced can be transformed into a positive outcome that allows for growth as a couple.

## IV – The Emperor



*“The Metamorphoses of Matter. The Emperor shapes matter in continuous transformation using his strength of reason. This is the time to exert your rational powers to transform ambitions into reality but when doing so do not suppress your deep rooted feelings.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

After spending countless days and night traversing the land, the Fool happens upon a vast kingdom ruled by an

almighty Emperor. Having learned so much thus far about himself, the Fool wonders how he can make an impact on the world as a whole. He, therefore, asks the Emperor “How do you manage such an unwieldy domain?”

“With good foundations and just rule. Strength and valour can win you the crown, but initiative and courage keep it.”

With that, the Fool wonders how it applies to his life. Up unto this moment he has been building the groundwork so that he may develop as a human being, but now he wonders whether it is time to form his only personal kingdom.

“Stop chasing dreams” the Emperor adds, “allow law and order - hopes and fears - to come to you naturally.” The Fool thinks he has his answer.

### Meaning

Sitting on a throne which is a reflection of his younger self, with an ankh and orb in his hands, this is a card that completes the High Priestess’ desires. It indicates that the questioner has perhaps travelled far since the beginning of their journey, and now has

filled the pages of their book. It is now maybe time to set up shop and begin to rule and have dominion over themselves and others. It is a card that serves as an indication that the time is ready to make decisive metamorphoses into the person they want to be. The questioner perhaps has all the knowledge and information they need, and has maybe even hit a brick wall in that regard, and the only way forward is to take control over their path and allow themselves to lead, instead of being led.

The staff and orb echoes what was illustrated on the Magician card, but whereas the Magician was flailing them about with vigour in this card they are controlled and balanced. This can indicate that the question has settled on an idea, on an action, and has resolved to follow it to its conclusion. For example, they may have finally decided on what they wish to do as a career and are taking constructive steps towards making it a reality.

In such a scenario this card is positive in that they will achieve the status of Emperor whether it is over others or just their thoughts. They will balance their psyche and, furthermore, they will

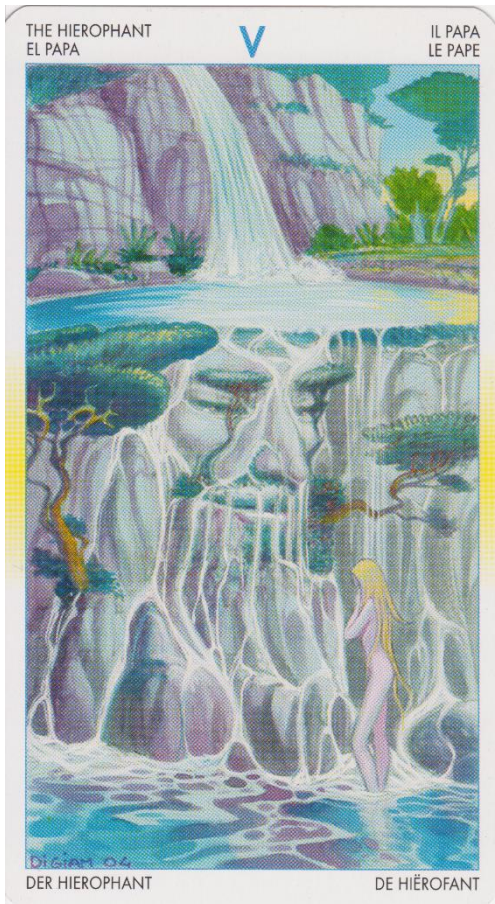
create a kingdom ruled by robust laws built upon sturdy roots.

The only warning associated with this card is that the questioner should not get too carried away with their power. Like an initially good King who becomes a tyrant, the questioner, too, can easily slip and become cruel and oppressive. In a way then this card, despite emphasising that the questioner has balanced the antithesistic lessons of the Magician and High Priestess, also signals that it is a precarious equilibrium that can all too easily become destabilized. Too much action or too little thought, or vice versa, will upset the harmony and cause the kingdom to rebel. To do so, then, they must use their initiative and creativity to solve all problems in a timely, just and efficient manner.

Therefore, it is a card that suggests that whatever they have achieved, or whatever they will achieve, will need to be ruled carefully and treated with respect, lest their work crumble. It is a card that indicates they have built sturdy foundations, and it is precisely that that will aid them and support them moving forward.



## V – The Hierophant



*“The Metamorphoses of the Secret. Your continuously changing awareness required new spiritual and psychic horizons. Do not become ensnared by dogmas and beliefs that you have already overcome.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

After leaving the Emperor’s Kingdom the Fool, by chance, comes across a unique waterfall resting in a small valley.

The water flows down the front of the cliff forming the illusion that the granite is carved into an old sage’s face.

Gazing up at the formation the Fool wonders whether the water is representative of himself: continuously flowing and creating new structures. He quickly realises, however, that the water erodes away the old stone forming new images in the rock. The Hierophant’s reflection will eventually fade away, and a new creature will be born. The Fool, believing that he must leave the past behind, continues on his way with a new sense of optimism.

### Meaning

For the most part, this is a card that indicates that to move forward the questioner must leave the past behind, in more ways than one.

On the one hand, this card can represent social or cultural oppression, whether overt or covert. The Hierophant is, of course, a religious figure which represents tradition. Although tradition is often tradition for a reason, in the vast majority of cases it serves as a hindrance to progress. This card thus suggests that like the face in the stone, these old ways

of doing things must be eroded by new modes of thinking – represented by the constantly changing and renewing water that flows over the edge. Through change, new experiences and adventures are born. Likewise, the questioner should be encouraged to question traditions or old-fashioned ways of thinking and look for ways, rationally, to move forwards in a dynamic and innovative way. This can thus, in essence, represent a time to break free of any shackles that are weighing them down.

On the other hand, this card can be more abstract and represent emotional or spiritual baggage. If we remember back to the Empress, we noted that every path has its ups and down, but it may be that some experience is holding them back.

It could, of course, relate to trauma – in which case this card suggests that they should, or will, let it go at last. It can also indicate the need to break free from the tradition of keeping things locked up and kept secret, and instead, encourage the questioner to seek professional help.

Alternatively, this card can also indicate that positive experiences are holding them back. These would be experiences

that filled the questioner with so much happiness and joy that they now feel as though nothing can quite compare. This would prevent them from enjoying what occurs at the moment. In this scenario, they would be best advised to let that experience go and look for new, different, ways to excite their passions. In other words, in both cases the message is simple: stop being held back by the past, or by tradition, and erode those unhelpful structures that have been formed around them. When this is completed great things can once again be accomplished.

## VI – The Lovers



*“The metamorphosis of desire. You can let yourself become engrossed by an irresistible attraction to someone or something that changes your personality but don’t forget that you always have the possibility of choosing.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Having broken free from tradition, the Fool has become a genuinely organic and down-to-earth character who is feeling confident about his future. He

continues along his merry way; towards what he actually desires. However, he soon runs into someone, a woman in fact - one of whom he feels is the most beautiful he has ever met.

It is love at first sight, and the Fool now has a choice. Does he follow his heart or his mind? Does he continue to chase that of which he set out to accomplish all the way back with the Magician, or does he divert his path and began anew with this woman?

The Fool thinks for a moment as he speaks to her. He realised that whatever path he chooses he will feel regret for not following the other. If he chooses her, it means breaking down the foundations he has built, but if he does not pick her, his mind will be eternally consumed what ifs.

He ultimately chooses love over success.

### Meaning

This is a difficult card to be drawn. On the one hand, it is representative of love – the highest of emotions. It need not necessarily be towards someone, but it can also be to something, such as their career, their hobbies or whatever it may

be. It may even be the case that the feeling of love has yet to arrive, but it soon will, and then they'll be faced with a difficult, almost irresistible decision.

All love requires sacrifice. Whether it is a parent sacrificing their career for their children, or a musician sacrificing their wealth for their passion, no matter the grandiosity of the fact all love requires renouncing something else. Regarding the tarot and the Fool's journey, it is the knowledge that they must give up much of what they've learned so far through the Magician to the Empress to the Hierophant – all of it requires dismantling so that the questioner can incorporate their newfound love into their lives.

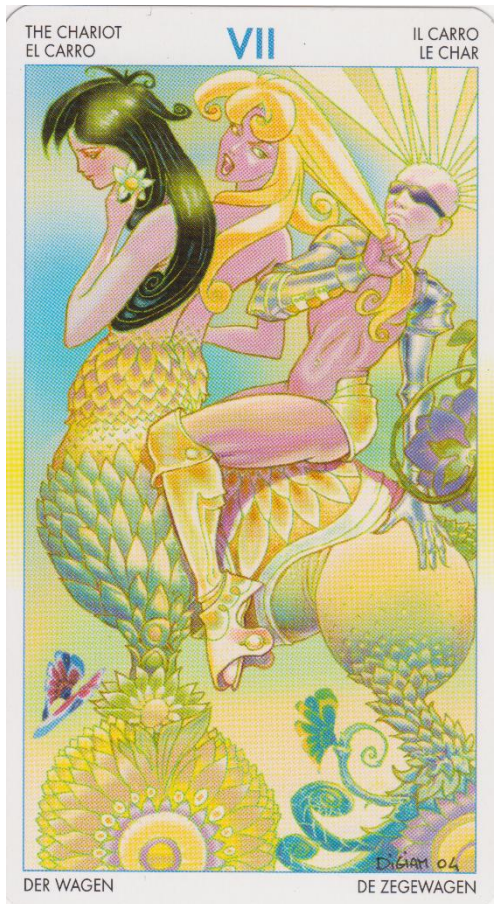
This, of course, has the potential to cause great harm, as well as significant benefits. On the positive side of things, it can lead to new-fangled feelings of joy and happiness. When love goes right, it goes right and is likely to stay with the afflicted person for the rest of their life. It would be wild to expect any rational human to ignore the powerful, all-consuming feelings to further the path that they are on. However, it is always worth noting that love can fade. Chaos can occur, relationships can break down,

careers can fall apart, and passions can turn into indifference. If this happens then the questioner would likely regret ever changing course – regret has, much like love, extreme staying power and can influence the questioner for the duration of their existence. On the flip side, rejecting the possibility of discovering real love would be equally as soul destroying. Thus, most would choose the chance at love over their dreams.

This is a card, then, that is less about love and more about choice: A difficult, potentially painful choice where every option can lead to despair. It is a card that offers little insight into solving the dilemma. The only possible advice comes from the illustration of a flying frog which is potentially symbolic of Eros – Cupid – the god of love. If this is true, then it indicates that Fate herself has decided the path for you. However, as with all things in life, the decision is ultimately up to the questioner: which risk are they willing to take? After all, "Tis better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all".



## VII – The Chariot



*“The Metamorphosis of Will. Grasp the reins of the Chariot and fearlessly continue along the road that you have marked out. Be careful, however, that inner motivations do not become transformed into unconscious aggressiveness.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

After choosing a path on accord of love the Fool and his partner chance across a golden chariot ridden by a semi-naked

knight of the sun. “Hail!” shouts the Fool as the Chariot grinds to a halt.

The Fool, questioning his motives once again, as he did with the Empress, wonders how he can move forward. All he had planned has now gone to waste, and he is facing the much larger question of what to do at all. “How do you know where to go?” The Fool asks the Knight.

“I choose my destination, and I chase it ruthlessly” he replied, thinking back to the many wars he has fought. “First, gather what you have, then look at what you want – what you wish to capture. Once you start moving, you’ll find than what you need and what you do not.”

With that, the charioteer grasped the hair of the blond centaur, and the wheels started turning. Giving chase the Fool cried “but how do I know what I want?” From the Chariot yelled “Look at what you want to need! What you do not want to live without.”

With that cryptic message, the Fool stood aghast. Whatever does it mean, he wondered. Like the High Priestess, it seemed eerily perplexing. He did learn something, however, that once you start

moving, you'll soon discover what it is you can live without.

### Meaning

The Chariot is a card with any number of meanings. The surreal, transcendental nature of the illustration itself is as cryptic as any in the deck. On the one hand, it's about choosing a path. The charioteer pictured has decided upon grasping the hair of the blond lady, as opposed to the brunette. This indicates that the questioner has chosen but may not have yet started moving.

On the other hand, it can be about confidence, determination, and commitment. After all, when a chariot is moving it takes some effort to stop. Likewise, any choice or decision the questioner may make is likely going to lead to a cascade of other consequences, some of which may be out of their control. In a way then the charioteer pictured only has partial control over his chariot – he can pull on the hair of either of the maidens, but ultimately it is their choice where they lead the chariot. In a more pragmatic sense, a real chariot is at the mercy of the horses. Although

they can be trained, they cannot be guaranteed to obey.

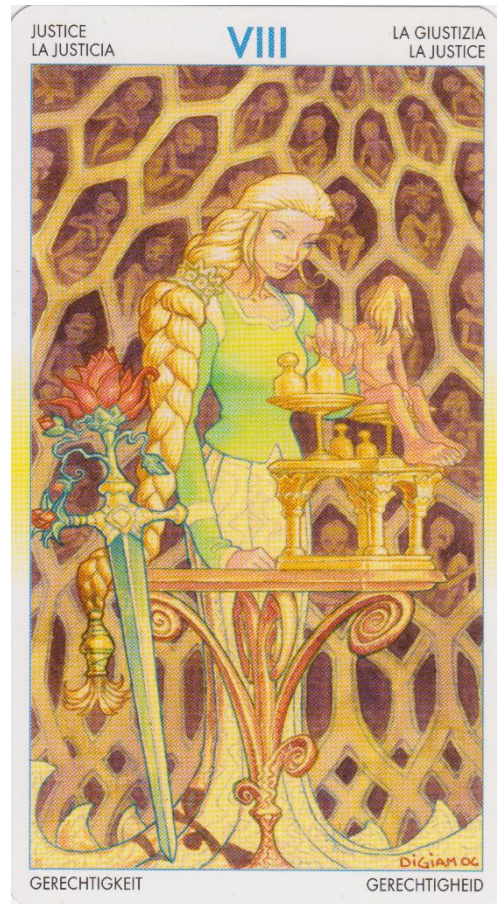
In such a scenario, then, this is a card which emphasises the saying that once you've bought a ticket, you have to take the ride. In the same way, the questioner may be consumed with doubt or fear over the consequences of their chosen path but, as the Tarot of Metamorphosis naturally represents, change is a part of living and sometimes a choice made by your own has is often better than a choice made for you by fate.

In either case, this card, since a chariot is an instrument of war, can indicate a potential struggle. In this case, the need for perseverance is necessary, and intransigence is required to fight powerful resistance. The golden colour scheme of the card, along with the solar iconography, is indicative of a positive outcome, but it is a battle that must be won.

Like the Magician, this is also a card that warns that the questioner should not get too carried away with their ambition, lest they sacrifice more of their life. Although it is a card that suggests that simply getting moving will illuminate what you do and do not

need in your life, since a chariot can only carry so much, it is also a card which indicates that excessive ambition or grandiose thoughts and actions can leave to severe consequences. Like a charioteer who, in his overbearing confidence, rides into battle thinking the war is already won, in a similar vein the questioner should not grow complacent and believe it to be an easy path. Instead, it encourages rational and utilitarian thinking. The questioner should approach all problems logically and without hubris, and by doing so they will be free of battles altogether eventually.

## VIII – Justice



*“The Metamorphosis of Order. Justice coordinates chaos and provides an orderly superstructure for the metamorphoses of existence. This is a time of great inner equilibrium which, because of its own nature, could cause strong resistance to transformations.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

After riding into his battles with passion and ambition the Fool, sensing the war has begun to be won, starts to wonder

how he can bring the chaos to a final ultimate close.

Coming across a grand temple in the forest he meets a woman who calls herself Justice. The fool sees the many honeycombs full of prenatal beings. He notes how each has a tomb the same size as the other, and how Justice has handed out space fairly to each one of them.

Nearby her sword and scales rest. The Fool can tell that, should the levels indicate it, Justice would have no moral qualms about handing down punishment to transgressors of the hive. He asks her "Can you bring order to my world?"

"Yes," she replies, "but it comes at a cost." The Fool expected nothing less.

### Meaning

This card very much echoes the Emperor. It is primarily about bringing structure to pandemonium. The questioner may, for example, be struggling with multiple different issues concurrently. This card would suggest, then, that they take a step back and examine how such problems can be collated. By doing so, by introducing

order, then may find that their kingdom runs much smoother than it otherwise would.

On the other hand this card can also present a dichotomy, and indeed, this is its most likely meaning. Justice's scales are evenly balanced, but any number of things would throw this equilibrium out. This, of course, echoes the Emperor card as well. Whereas that card was about having things in harmony, independently, this card is more about balancing interlocked issues or problems, or even just simple occurrences, with the sword rather than the pen. It suggests that to maintain peace and lawfulness sometimes aggressive and even morally dubious behaviour is necessary. The only thing that matters is that it is ethically correct - that Justice has been dealt, that the ying is in harmony with the yang. This of course perhaps requires sacrifice, but if that is what is needed to bring order then so be it.

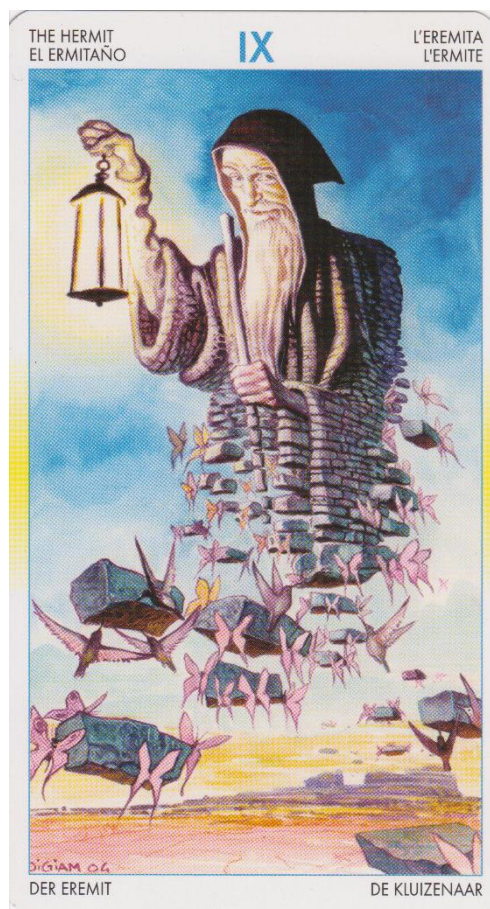
In summary, then, this is a card that emphasises the need for fair and resolute action in the face of chaos. Whereas the Emperor warned of avoiding becoming a tyrant, this card would welcome it if it was a



fundamental aspect of bringing about conformity.

There is an actual warning associated with this card, however. The children illustrated are contained in fairly sized compartments and are all weighted to ensure unanimity, but such dedication to keeping things the equitable has, clearly, sacrificed the ability for those individuals to metamorphose into something else entirely. Likewise, the questioner should note that although complete order and sound legal structures can be useful it should only be a temporary thing. That is, of course, unless they are happy with the stalemate but, as with much of the Major Arcana, this card suggests that to move forward anymore they should keep the chaos flowing, at least in some regard. The cost of either war or peace is, therefore, significant, but a state of equilibrium between the two, as would be suggested by the Emperor card, is preferable. For now, however, brief order would help resolve issues, but bring about other entirely.

## IX – The Hermit



*“The Metamorphosis of Silence. The most important transformations are those that need the most time. Be patient and let your personality be transformed and adapt to the needs of your higher self, whose voice can be heard only in the inner silence.”*

### The Fool's Journey

After the Fool had brought order to the chaos by way of the help of Justice, he had some time to reorganize and

prioritize his battles. Tired of the war, and tired with the struggles, however, he retreated to the great plains to spend some time alone.

While there, while he lived in silence, he discovered a whole new world, miles apart from the busy tumultuous life he had led thus far. Whereas all the way back when he met the Magician he learned that action is the key to illuminating the path ahead, here he realised that often inaction is just as necessary. By ceasing work and taking the time to turn inwards, the Fool learned that there is a whole new world to be exposed – a dark puzzling world where reality breaks down and the mind, the imagination, rules.

### Meaning

Showing an old man, being built from stone, illuminating his path with a lamp this card signals the beginning of the Major Arcana's shift away from material reality and into the spiritual realm.

The Gaslight merely heralds the beginning of new paths being exposed. Whereas in the past up until this point the cards have signalled the need for

action, this card suggests that introspection is required. A hermit, naturally, is free from the humdrum of everyday life. They are free from the need for social approval or the requirement to please others. By being such an individual the Fool, the questioner, can begin to learn more about themselves as a person. This is, therefore, a card about understanding the psyche. By doing so, the questioner can create more stable foundations upon which they can move forward. It is, in a way, a card about maturity, about realising that sometimes you have to reflect on your life and behaviour so that you can develop more as a human being.

Although the cards this far have demonstrated that disorder can arise from action, this card suggests that the questioner should take some time alone to consider their current state of affairs. After all, the situation illustrated, one where the Hermit is apparently seeking out some unknown path, perhaps indicates the questioner's desire to solidify and strengthen their kingdom – their mind - which was steadied by Justice. It represents, again, a need for solitude and thoughtful reflection. In a pragmatic sense, it encourages patience

and self-control. Regarding examples if the questioner is considering beginning a new relationship then this card would support that they take the time to analyse what it is they truly desire before taking action. If the questioner feels the need to retire from their chosen career, then this card is indicative of someone who would benefit from just taking the time to allow all the pieces of their new life to fall into place.

In essence, then, this is a card that suggests now is the time to find peace and tranquillity – a place where the many pieces of the questioner's life can gently come together to create a natural harmony, as opposed to the synthetic equilibrium brought about by Justice alone.

## X – The Wheel of Fortune



*“Everything changes, the only thing that remains the same is continuous metamorphosis. The Wheel teaches and urges us to renew and transform ourselves continuously, acquiring that open-mindedness necessary for adapting to new circumstances.”*

### The Fool's Journey

Having returned from his self-imposed solitude, the Fool see that significant change has occurred in his lands. With

inaction or action, he realises that the wheel of time marches forward, and things and people change.

On the beaches of his mind, he meets a twisted mollusc-based mermaid holding a flower. "All things change" she speaks. "From death comes life, and from life comes death."

The fool notices that out at sea a ship is sailing by merrily. "Will it stop?" he asks the woman gazing out at the vast ocean.

"Maybe, maybe not" she replies "But should it stop, it will eventually begin moving. Moreover, should it be moving it will eventually stop. Time never ceases, and all things must change."

"And what of my world, my kingdom?" the Fool wonders.

"It, too, will change. It will rise and fall, and fall and rise. You can prepare and perhaps then you will be fortunate, else only ruin and despair awaits."

### Meaning

This card is ultimately one about inevitable change. About luck, good or bad. The illustration has many symbols

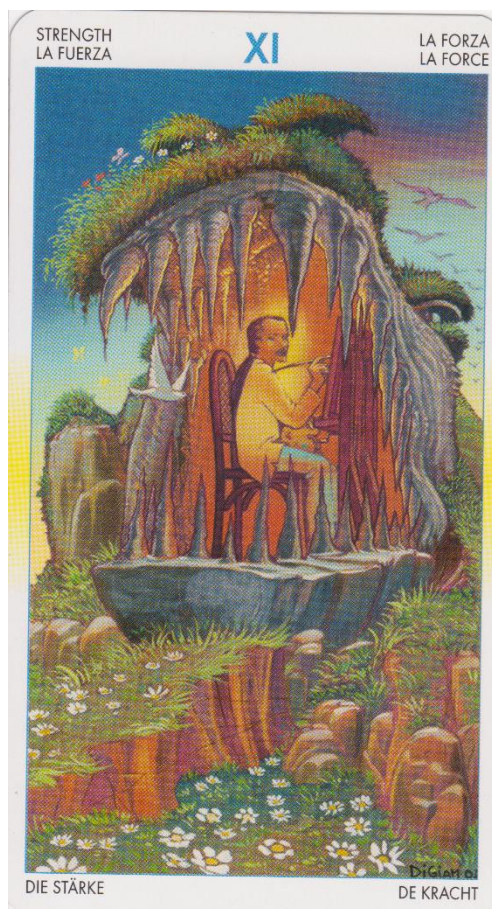
of this: from the rotting skull and the ripe apple sitting near each other on the sand, to the remnants of a colossal artificial statue birthing organic trees. This all indicates one thing: transformations from one thing to another.

Although not quite as drastic as the Death card this nonetheless represents that the questioner is likely going through a period of new and interesting developments that may, or may not be, intentional. They may be saved by the passing ship, or it may simply sail on past. Whatever the case, fate has decided their path and on it they must travel.

It is a card that can also encourage preparation. To overcome the tides, vast structures must be built. This is so that the questioner can not only survive waves of poor luck but also benefit greatly from the endowment of good luck. In either case, the message is simple: evolution. People mature, passions expand, careers develop, life – in general – changes. All that the questioner can do is embrace such ebbs and flows and incorporate what lady luck has bestowed upon them, whether good or bad, for better or for worse.



## XI – Strength



*“The Metamorphoses of Energy. Even the most frightening and aggressive force can be sublimated through metamorphosis. Strength helps us correctly channel the lowest energy, transforming and purifying them. Be careful of excessive trust.”*

### The Fool's Journey

Seeing that the sands of time flow on without him, the Fool, while moving forward once again, passes a cave – a

tomb – within which an artist paints his masterpieces. “How is it that you survive? How is it you have the time to paint in this world?” the Fool yells through the opening which is surrounded by sharp stalactites and stalagmites.

“Cooperation” Strength replies as a dove flutters through the mouth of the cave. “My weakness is that I cannot escape, yet the doves is that he cannot paint. Together, working in harmony, we are strong, but alone we both suffer.”

The Fool begins to wonder about his shortcomings. All this time he has been struggling to improve, when really he feels he should have been forming bonds to overcome obstacles.

### Meaning

On traditional Tarot cards, strength is often drawn as a woman taming a lion. In that case, she uses her intellect to overcome the animal's ignorance, and the big cat uses its strength to overcome her fragility. Together they are an unstoppable force.

In a similar vein, this card which illustrates a dove flying through the

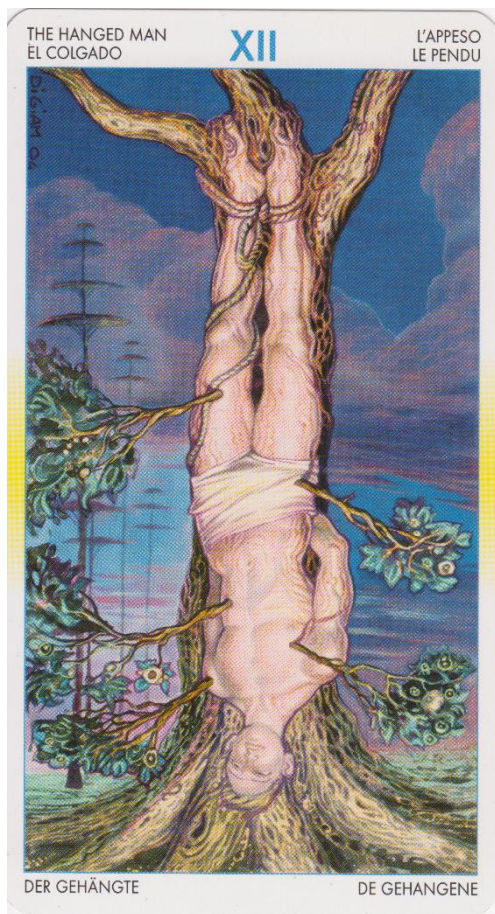
mouth of a cave – which the painter cannot escape – represents the need, or the desire, to overcome obstacles through cooperation and coordination. This card demonstrates that, although the man cannot be free, he possesses the higher conscious states associated with art of creativity. Likewise, the dove is free and can presumably bring the man food and water, although the animal is of a lower order and doesn't possess the ability to craft paintings. Together they each overcome their flaws and create a balanced whole that utilizes each of their strengths.

For this reason, the questioner – most likely represented by the artist – no doubt possesses some distinct set of skills or talents that are unable to be exploited due to the restrictions placed on them by fate. The card specifically alludes to the higher states of consciousness achieved through artistic endeavours, meditation, or just plain thought., but can easily describe any strength which the questioner has. The questioner, for example, may be skilled at analysis but is unable to communicate their findings effectively due to deficits in their writing ability. The advice this card would give then is to play to this

strength and employ others – literally or figuratively - to aid in their pursuit. For the given example it may be by finding a brilliant writer who is less proficient at analysis. It can also simply mean that they should return to education and use others strengths, their knowledge, to improve their own. Similarly, if the questioner has any strength that is being held back by a weakness they should look for aid from others to improve it. By doing so they will create a unique partnership where each party can thrive and, ultimately, the questioner can have the time needed to develop their spiritual or emotional self.

In a more pragmatic sense this card can just represent what it says on the tin, so to speak. The questioner may be going through a difficult period, and this card can indicate that strength – a resolute will – is necessary to continue and to, once again, thrive. Alternately it can be indicative of someone who possesses a strong mind or body and is utilizing this skill to help others who are deficient. Lastly, it can mean that the questioner will be, when faced with problematic circumstances, granted strength by fate and that they will overcome their dilemma with ease.

## XII – The Hanged Man



*“The Metamorphosis of Surrender. Consciously and joyously surrender to Fate, confident that every temporary hardship carries the sprout of healing, of future metamorphosis.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Having brought order and Justice to his kingdom and having overcome his weaknesses by creating harmonious equilibriums with others, the Fool begins to wonder where he could go

from here. All his affairs are in order, and he has reached a perilous deadlock – unable to move forward any further and incapable of surmounting the problems in front of him.

Having reached the end of his materialistic journey, he finds a large tree in a calm forest. He climbs to the top to gaze out upon his lands before suddenly feeling a tug at his feet. The tree is alive and is binding he ankles with twine. Before long the Fool feels a gentle warmth come over him as he slowly descends to an upturned position. There he hanged for forty days and forty nights as branches pierced giving way to fresh blossoms. Despite the agony, he nonetheless feels serene, as if the world has taken on a whole new perspective. He finally begins to see a brand new path revealed.

### Meaning

This is very much a transition card. Immediately preceding the Death card, the Hanged Man merely represents the need for, or the experience of, a change of perspective. The questioner may feel that they are currently unable to proceed in their life, or perhaps they

believe that they are reaching the end of some aspect, and this is a card that indicates that in order to progress they must necessarily upright themselves and take a look at their life from an entirely new dimension. For example, if they have spent lots of time focused on material pursuits this card can suggest that to develop further then need to take a more spiritual approach.

Unfortunately, despite the fact that the illustration indicates that from such actions new branches – new ideas and experiences – will grow, it also implies that it will be a long and painful experience. Trees, naturally, take time to expand and, likewise, the questioner should be made aware of the fact that such drastic transformations will not happen overnight. They may have to get into a new habit, for example, which is something that requires persistence and perseverance.

Furthermore, the branches will pierce the very core of their essence. Like all things in life, changes require sacrifice. In addition to this, the card can be symbolic of the sort of radical shamanic initiation ceremonies of the past – for example, the Native American sun dance. For such metamorphoses to

result in any appreciable difference there needs to be pain and suffering so that the karmic balance can be tilted in favour of positive occurrences.

Regardless, what this card does suggest is that the questioner – as the little white booklet implies – should surrender to these inevitable changes. Fate has brought their life to a halt for a purpose, and that purpose may very well be spiritual or psychological development. By allowing themselves to be guided by their intuition they may suffer but the result will be a net positive which will enable them to expand their consciousness in new and exciting ways. In essence: a significant change of perspective is needed to continue.



## XII – Death



*“The Great Metamorphosis. Nothing is ever destroyed. However, the game of becoming would be impossible without the renewal of worn out forms. You must be courageous in confronting profound behavioural changes and even radical transformations of personality.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

While hanging upright, watching the world go by from an alternative perspective, the Fool begins to fall prey

to intense visions and hallucinations. He sees himself walking down a bizarre path that seems to disappear behind him as he progresses.

In the distance pale lady with long black hair begging to arise out of the mist. “Who are you?” asks the Fool.

“More of the question” she replies “who were you?”

“Who was I?” queries the Fool, wondering what strange realm he has fallen into.

“Do you not realise?” the woman spoke, as a cold child and a sense of woe overcame the Fool. “It is the end. I am Death, the herald of new beginnings and the destroyer of old worlds.”

“I have no wish to go yet!” yelled the Fool.

“Fear not, your body remains, but your mind is ceasing to be what it was. From my will comes evolution, and you too shall evolve.”

### Meaning

Death can be a frightening card, but it need not be. Although it signifies, surprisingly, Death it does not

necessarily indicate oncoming physical oblivion. Rather it is more indicative of the end of something.

On the one hand, it can be a reassuring card if drawn in relation to a problem the questioner is suffering. It heralds the end of the dilemma, the resolution of corollary obstacles and, above all, the cessation of worry and fear. After all, it is only from death that new ideas and new lives can germinate. In a way, then, this is a card that indicates that things will soon change, and although the change may initially be terrifying or agonizing – like death – the result will be that fills the questioner with alacrity. For example, if they are suffering from serious career problems this card can indicate that this will stop being the case and that from it a new brighter future will emerge – one with perhaps a new job or better working conditions.

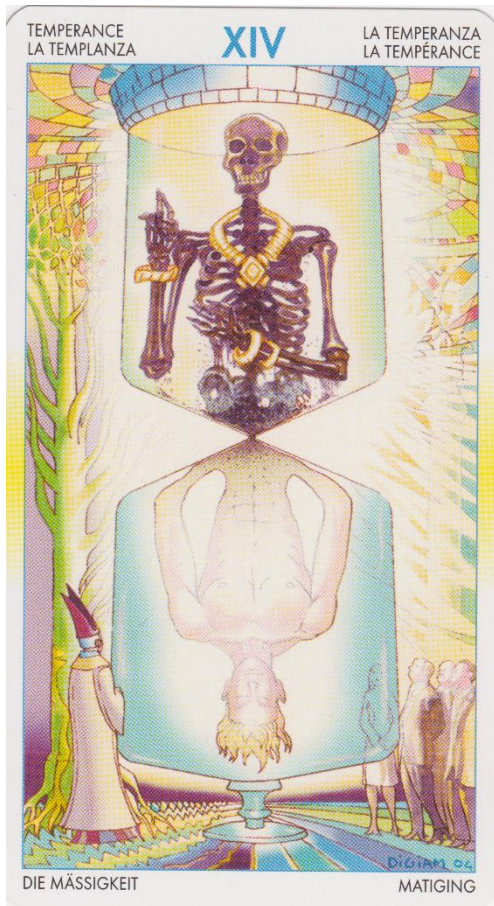
On the other hand, this card can be more personal and represent changes to the psyche of the questioner. Old habits or ways of thinking may die and give way to spiritual or emotional enlightenment. The questioner may, for example, be filled with grief over the death of someone or something. In this case, this card is indicative that such feelings will

pass, and they will emerge from the darkness stronger and more resolute. Although it would be a painful experience as is all death in every respect, the net result is one of positive psychological growth.

To use the imagery associated with this card – that of a man walking down a long road – Death can also represent a change in direction. The path that the questioner is on, like the Fool, may radically shift to a different course. The road may fall out from underneath the questioner, so to speak, and from it, a new route will be laid out in front of them. In such a case the questioner should be encouraged to follow their intuition and let themselves be led by Fate to a new, brighter future.

All in all, the simple takeaway message from this card is that from death comes life and vice versa. Things change, and things die, but only by doing so can new opportunities and experiences be given room to grow and flourish. Death, although painful, ultimately gives way to life. It is, in the end, a positive card that signifies profound evolution.

## XIV – Temperance



*“The Metamorphosis of the Psyche. Temperance balances the opposite polarities of existence in an inner metamorphosis that renews the human being. Pursue the harmony you seek, avoid stagnant situations and crystallizations, both mental and material.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Continuing down the path that Death presented him, the Fool arrives at a

beautiful temple. Walking in he sees at the centre a large hourglass, balancing out two pseudo-Nephilim.

“What message do you have to give me” the Fool hesitantly asks a priest, gazing up at the illuminated structure.

“Fight for Harmony” he replies. “Material and spiritual, life and Death, Justice and chaos, two passions, two beliefs. Bring them into harmony and you’ll find your mind at peace.”

The Fool wonders, realising his whole life has been about choice. Death had shown him the ultimate dichotomy, but it was perhaps the only thing that cannot be brought into equilibrium. He initially struggled to incorporate his visions into his rational thoughts, but then he realised that it need not be one or the other, it can merely be both in harmony. “Temperance” he whispered to himself before departing.

### Meaning

Another simple card, relatively speaking. In it, we see a dark coloured physical skeleton adorned with golden material wealth. Opposite, in equal amounts, rests a glowing ethereal being

representing the spirit. Whatever way you look at it this card encourages that whatever it is in the questioner's life that they are having issues with, it can, with care and hard work, be resolved through temperate actions. If they are, for example, struggling to incorporate a busy social life into a stressful career then this card suggests that, instead of focusing on one over the other, they should instead try to find harmony between the two – taking a little of each to satisfy themselves. By doing so, they should take care to not damage other aspects of their life in the process. There should be a positive equilibrium, as opposed to a damaging polarity. More about the card at hand it can signify that the questioner needs to merge their spiritual beliefs with their rational material wishes.

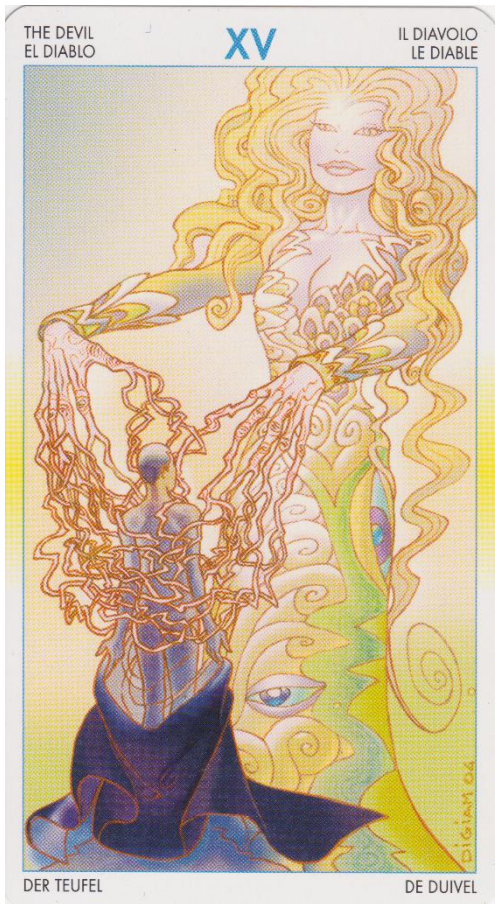
However, how do they achieve harmony? Experimentation. They need to, like the priest presumably, take the time and effort to study their situation and look for ways to resolve their problems. The questioner may feel lost and hopeless, but this card is indicative of eventual success. With patience and perseverance, they can achieve a beneficial equilibrium that serves their

purposes well. By doing so, they may find themselves in a much more positive state of mind – a world in which they have fewer worries and greater happiness.

This card, therefore, represents exactly what it says on the tin: Temperance - as opposed to abstinence - is critical. Taking the varying aspects of their life and applying the theory of moderation, to different degrees depending on the facet, will ultimately produce positive emotional and spiritual results. This is what this card represent: a successful transformation following on from the Death of old binary ways of thinking.



## XV – The Devil



*“The Metamorphosis of Darkness. The Devil carries extreme contradiction: He is the great oppose but also the great vital reservoir from which we can draw. Stop fighting your darkness and you will see it transformed into something different.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

After leaving the Temple of Temperance, the Fool suddenly feels overcome by rage and hatred. In the

distance, a warmly coloured female figure rises and from her hand stretch great tendrils. These engulf the Fool and bring about a terrifying fury.

“What power has overcome me!” cried the Fool angrily. “What are you?”

“I am your primitive mind” booms the Devil. “I make you, you. I am your intuition, your fear, your anger.”

“Leave me in peace” begs the Fool.

“But alas, you cannot escape me.” It suddenly dawns on the Fool, in all his furore, that although his subconscious drives him, it also feeds him. It allows him to survive. Without his primal intuition guiding his conscious thoughts, he would perish without ambition or passion. Such feelings are necessary, and a part of human life.

“Now do you see” questions the Devil. “You cannot run from me, nor can you hide. You have no option but to embrace me.”

### Meaning

A relatively powerful card, this indicates one of two things. Firstly, it is indicative of the subconscious self. This is the part of us and the questioner which provokes

feelings of rage and anger, but also of love and passion. The Devil card, therefore, indicates the emotional side of life that we cannot escape. Rather all we can do is channel these feelings, even those of hatred or despair, into something which is uniquely positive and beneficial. The problem that the questioner may be facing may involve numerous different issues which invoke primal feelings of fear or anxiety. They should be reminded that such feelings are completely natural and authentic – it is, after all, what makes them human. Instead of fighting them, or even fighting over primitive feelings such as lust or greed, they should be aware of them and learn to incorporate the behavioural consequences into their life. If they are angry, then they are likely fiercely passionate, and this can be a positive trait if used and directed correctly. In essence: Don't fight the emotions but, instead, learn to utilize such feelings.

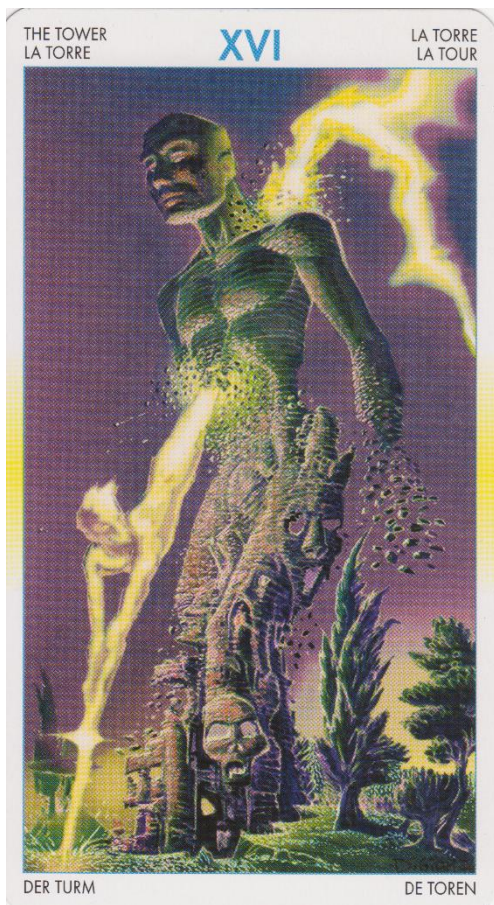
On the other hand, this card is, naturally, associated with a disturbing warning. The Fool is illustrated as being controlled by a dominant external force and, likewise, the questioner may be being strongly influenced by something

or someone beyond their reach. This card can, therefore, indicate that to progress any further they have to break free of the incarceration that they are suffering – literally or metaphorically, emotionally or physically.

By loosening their stranglehold, which may or may not be simply the problem that is afflicting them, they will perhaps start to see a path out of the forest, so to speak. It is entirely possible that the perceived external influence is in fact once more the subconscious – which in a way is exogenous as it is out of the control of the conscious self.

This all being said the Devil is another card, then, that signifies the need for radical change. In this case, it is the subconscious that requires metamorphosis. Alternatively, to put another way, the conscious mind of the questioner need to wrangle control of the basal instincts that drive them. By doing so, they may feel empowered and confident and therefore able to overcome any obstacle in their path.

## XVI – The Tower



*“The Metamorphoses of Renewal. The Appearance of the Tower signals that you may have resisted change for too long, which is now inevitable. The accumulated energies need to flow again and the old calcified structures, now superfluous, must be destroyed.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Having faced the great monsters of his psyche – Death and the Devil – and learned that giving into primal desires

is beneficial in moderation, the Fool begins to query himself on where his vision will take him next.

Walking down the golden path, free from the clutches of the Devil, he comes to a clearing in the woodland. In the distance stands an enormous sentient humanoid tower looming over the luscious terrain. “What purpose do you serve?” the Fool questions.

Before the Tower can answer the earth begins to shake, and the Fool is abruptly brought back into lucidity by a bolt of lightning piercing his heart. In his mind’s eye, he sees the tower, which had taken the form of the Fool at a younger age, crumbling to dust. The tree from which he was hung releases its tight grip and the Fool plummets to the ground in agony. Death, in all her malevolent glory, speaks to him as a whisper as the Fool begins to sober up, “Oblivion is not ready for you yet.”

### Meaning

From the Hanged Man onwards the Major Arcana indicate a need for a psychological change. Whether it is the death of the old ways of doing things or learning to bring disparate parts of their

reality into equilibrium, or even just plan controlling their basal emotion for their benefit, the cards, in general, suggest that a paradigm shift is in order. The Tower card, however, indicates that this conversion is taking place.

In its most basic form, it is a card that shows that the questioner is being razed to the ground, metaphorically. From the ashes, and from the crumbled stone, they can rebuild and move forward. The Tower is a card that signifies that it will not be pleasant. It implies that such a significant change will happen suddenly and without warning and will, unfortunately, destabilize their life. It may be by a conscious or subconscious act on the part of the questioner, but may also be caused by Fate herself.

For example, it may be a classical upset: sudden death, the loss of a job, the breakup of marriage; alternately it could be something more abstract such as a revelation that their belief system is based on a fallacy. This would, naturally, cause great upheaval as the questioner attempts to rebuild the foundations their lives are built upon.

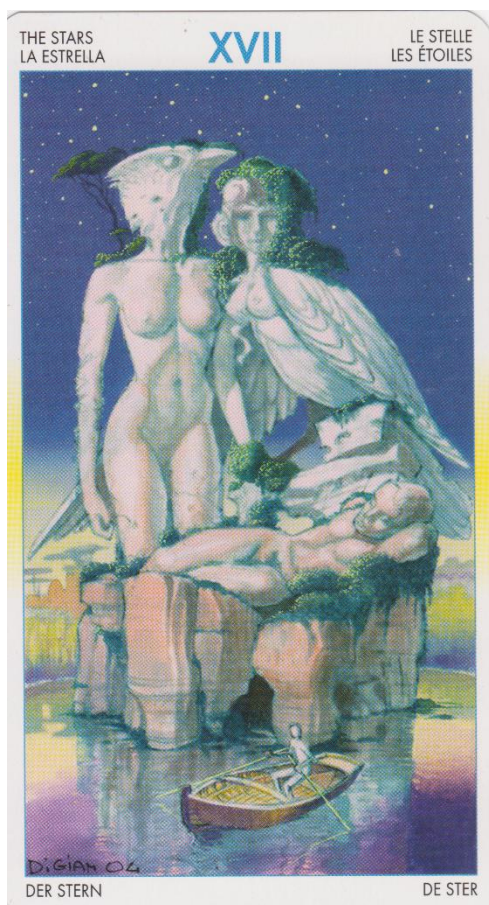
In a subtle way, the skull at the foot of the Tower pictured suggests death. The

base of a tower, the foot, is the part which stabilizes the whole structure in its entirety. It is also the first necessary piece of the tower that has to be put in place. The skull can, therefore, indicate that whatever the questioner experienced a long time ago, back when they were merely a Fool meeting the Magician, was based upon lies. This could in an entirely negative sense indicate that friendships were betrayed, careers built on false hopes or merely religious beliefs formed on the basis of unholy supports. Whatever it is, this card indicates that all that has been constructed upon it is going to collapse and disintegrate.

This will, unsurprisingly, be a painful experience. Just like how the Death card signifies the both the end of something and the start of something new, this card also indicates that from the ruins will be built a stronger, nobler structure that is based upon truth, as opposed to falsities. The questioner should, therefore, see it as an opportunity to be born again - a chance to build a new life that is more privy to their whims.



## XVII – The Stars



*“The Metamorphosis of Dream. The metamorphosis of our evolutionary journey are interwoven with those of the entire cosmos. We perceive this delicate wisdom through the changing realm of dreams. Let’s allow ourselves to be guided by these ideas, weighing our actions with a dose of healthy realism.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Having had the very core of his being shaken and destroyed, the Fool sets out

of the road once more looking for a new path to travel.

Weary after a day’s journey he rests his head on the grass near the edge of a lake. Gazing up at the sky he sees the sun set and a million stars appear from the darkness. A whole world that was hidden by the light he sought refuge in has appeared and, before long, the Fool begins to feel remarkably insignificant.

He starts to wonder if there is more to this world than meets the eye. Gazing up he cannot but feel that the universe is vast and overwhelming yet by chance here he is, conscious and aware.

The Fool now starts to feel a sense of cosmic wonder as a new spiritual path becomes open to him. Seeing a boat nearby he climbs in and sets sail.

### Meaning

If the Major Arcana up to the Hanged Man were about the material world, and the Hanged Man up to and including the Tower was about the emotional world, then the Stars card signals the shift into the spiritual world.

In this card, we see a small man piloting a boat around a vast sculpture through



calm waters. The sky above him is full of stars. The most obvious thing about this card is the sense of scale. Not only does the carving dwarf the individual pictured, but that itself is minified by the cosmic backdrop.

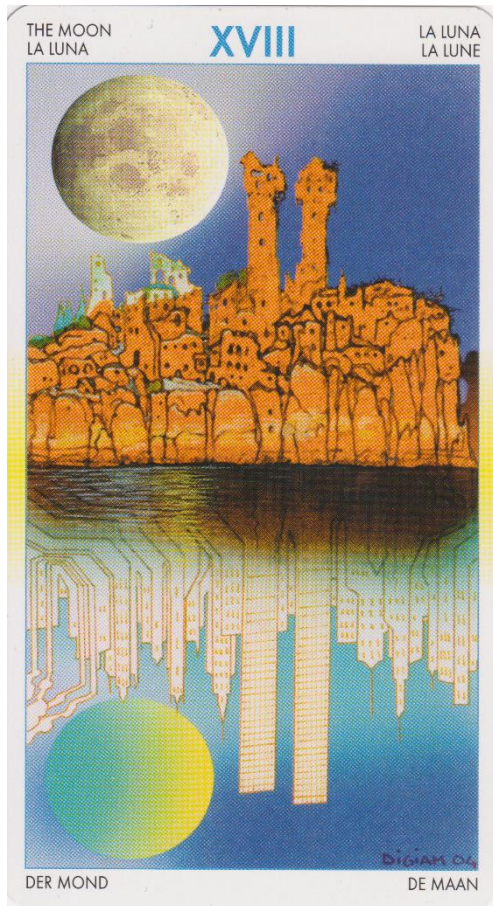
On the one hand, such scale can indicate that the questioner is feeling overcome with feelings of smallness. They may feel as though there are problems in their life that are so huge, so vast, that they are ultimately insurmountable. For example, they may be burdened with enormous amounts of debt, or maybe they are caught up in a giant web of lies or confusion. Whatever it is this card offers little advice, except the fact that there is always something larger. Even the numerous stars pictured only comprise of a small portion of the observable universe. In much the same way the questioner should be reassured that, in the grand scheme of things, their problems are insignificant. Just as the stars fade when the sun rises, their dilemmas will, too, eventually disappear and be resolved. In a similar vein, the man is riding of calm seas around an obstacle, which can indicate that the problem will be, or should be,

approached with calmness. In a way then it is a card that promotes optimism.

On the other hand, it is a card that can concern more existential questioners. Deep philosophical conundrums may plague the questioner. If this is the case, then it is a card that heralds the start of a paradigm shift into a more spiritual dimensions. It is a card that encourages the questioner to explore the world – the universe and its stars – so that they may come to a deeper understanding about reality.

In the later scenario, the advice would be to pursue such avenues wholeheartedly. Whether it is by taking up meditation, joining a covenant or just living a more ethical life, whatever it is that can bring the questioner closer to the immaterial world – the world of dreams and illusions – should be taken up. As the Little White Booklet suggests, however, all undertakings should be approached with realism and that they should not let themselves be led astray by deceit and fallacy, lest they build another unstable tower. All in all, a positive card that heralds the expansion of mental horizons, and the evolution of a way of thinking that is more in tune with the fabric of the universe as a whole.

## XVIII – The Moon



*“The Metamorphoses of Illusion. The double image of the Moon, the black Hecate, and the white Selene, immerses reality in an ambiguous light where what appears to be is often an illusion. Therefore rely on intuition and feelings, the other side of this Arcanum, to confront unconscious fears and harmonize reality with the dream.”*

### The Fool's Journey

Sailing down the river under the stars the Fool chances upon a ruin sticking its head up out of the water. Illuminated by the Moon it reflects a copy into the calm waters on which it rests.

Blinded by the illusionary world, unable to see which form is true, the Fool gets lost in his own mind. “Surely I am just dreaming,” thinks the Fool, remembering back to when he laid down to rest by the banks of the river. “Surely I will soon awake.”

Alas, he does not, and he fears for his sanity. Attempting to guide his ship around the formation he finds himself drawn closer and closer as the Moon shifts the mirage. He cannot see a path through or around the obstacle. Instead, he decides he must now allow himself to be guided by Fate - his intuition.

### Meaning

Much like the Suited Two cards the Moon is about a dichotomy, but unlike those suited cards, it is not about choice. We note that pictured are two opposing realities: we have the visible moon

reflected as a transcendental figure, and we have the quiet long forsaken ruins mirrored as a bustling city complete with factories.

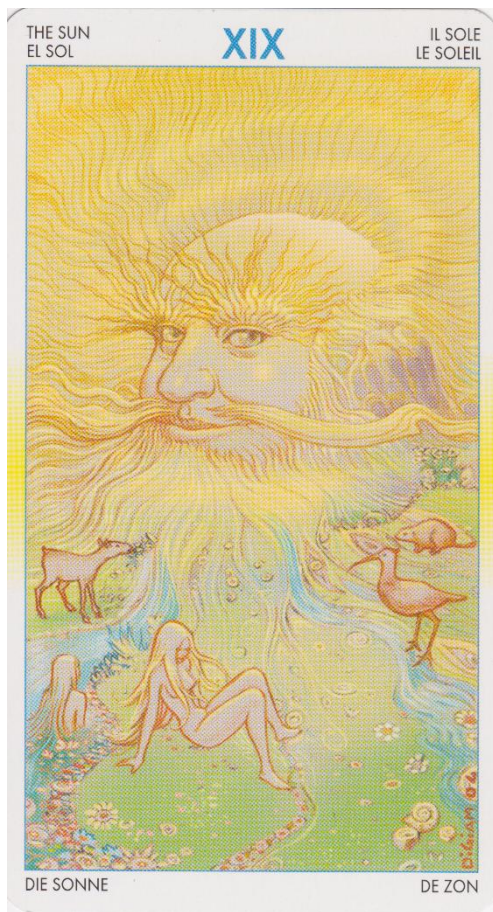
In one regard this can indicate that the questioner feels a sense of confusion surrounding some pressing issue or conundrum. They may feel as though they are attempting to separate fact from fiction and, perhaps unable to; this may cause some degree of stress. With two opposing forces in equilibrium, maybe one concerning the body and another concerning the mind, it is often difficult to distinguish the truth from the lies. This card that lacks the presence of any stars which can indicate that it is a case of it being darkest before the dawn. If this seems possible, then the questioner is best advised to wait it out since, eventually, the sun will rise, and all illusions will be vanquished.

On a more primal note, this card can be indicative of nightmares. It can suggest that the questioner is feeling a sense of dread or bewilderment and is perhaps filled with anxiety or fear. This may concern any aspect of their life, from careers to relationships, but it general indicates a fear that they are, in a way, dreaming. That is to say, they may feel

as though not all is what it seems to be and, if this is the case, then it can be a very distressing time to exist.

If they are currently living in happiness then this card can suggest that maybe they feel that it is all too good to be true and that it will, eventually, come crashing down. On the other hand, if they are experiencing negative emotions then it is a card that suggests that they may fear that they'll never escape from their despair, in much the same way as dreamer fears they will not wake up from a nightmare. The questioner in these situations should be reminded that all things come to pass and that the majority of illusions are, usually, transient. They should in the meantime allow themselves to be guided by their subconscious intuition – the seat of both rationality and dreaming – and by doing so, they may acquire a more optimistic outlook on life.

## XIX – The Sun



*“The Metamorphosis of Life. Everything appears as it truly is. Without any type of tricks, proceed confidently towards the objectives that you have set, letting the energy of the Sun illuminate and fully renew your personality.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

After spending the night lost in a daze, unable to see his way around the fog, his boat eventually drifts upon an opening in the woodland. In the distance, the sky

begins to turn bright red, and the sun starts its journey to gift him the morning.

On the banks of the river numerous fauna come out to drink and feed. After landing his vessel, he comes across two women playing in the waters.

“Where am I?” asks the Fool.

“Exactly where you would want to be” they reply. “Come, bask in the warm glow of Helios and find peace and tranquillity.”

The Fool thought of nothing more pleasing. He sat and rested for a while – happy that he had escaped the clutches of the night, and especially of the Moon.

### Meaning

Perhaps one of the most positive cards in the deck there is very little to say about the Sun. It merely represents peace and tranquillity. A sense of all the questioner’s chickens coming home to roost.

Whatever it is in their life that has been troubling them, or whatever it is that they have been struggling to overcome, will be vanquished. Thus, calm and serenity will be restored.



It is, on top of this, a card about success and completion. There is no subtle meaning associated with this card. Unlike Justice it is not a card that indicates the need for sacrifice, nor is it like Temperance that signifies the need for experimentation and it is subsequent failures. Instead, the Sun merely implies that everything is well, everything is in order, and everything is harmonious. They have accomplished exactly what they set out to achieve all the way back with the Magician. They have brought their mind into balance and escaped the clutches of illusion. Everything is perfect.

The only warning that could in any way be presented by this card is that the questioner should not get too caught up in basking in the sunlight, lest they get burned. It is a card which, in one sort of way, indicates that the questioner ought to have their moment of joy and euphoria, but then it is the time to move on to new pastures – if it feels necessary. After all the feeling will no doubt soon fade, and the questioner will wish to do more with their lives, as is natural to want to do. They should be encouraged, then, that when the time is right, it is best to move out of the glow of the Sun.

## XX – Judgement



*“The Metamorphoses of the Spirit. In the most profound recesses of our psyche sleep precious chrysalides waiting to be reawakened. Let this change occur and acquire a new more open creative outlook of things.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

Leaving the warm glow of the Sun the Fool decides that the time is right to move onto new challenges, and so he sets out on the road once more.



Coming across a gateway he sees a man sitting atop a wall. This piper – Judgement – appears to hold the key. “May I enter?” Asks the Fool.

“Of course!” yells the man as he begins to play his trumpet. The great doorway begins to creak open, but before the Fool can enter glowing spirits come crawling out. They look familiar in an unsettling way.

Before long the Fool realises that these creatures are him – his older selves. “No!” says the Fool, “I need not be reminded of my follies!”

“But alas,” returns Judgement, “This is your last obstacle. You cannot escape your past, my friend.”

The Fool quivers. Regret and dread flow over him. “There is nothing I can do” he wails, “the past is beyond my reach.”

“Then why do you fear it?” quizzes Judgement, “why is it that it holds your hostage? Why is it that you are still hurt by those things of which you can no longer change?”

“Because I made mistakes!”

“Then learn to accept them, learn from them and allow yourself to be free from the shackles of sorrow. This is one thing

you cannot change, but you can change how you feel.”

Warmth flows over the Fool. He realises that his last challenge is one of acceptance. All this time he has been looking towards the future – to further his development – but now is the time to accept the mistakes he had made on his journey. The Fool suddenly feels at peace, and as the feeling engulfs him the spirits – the demons – of his past fade into the terrain. “The door is open” whispers Judgement “the time has come for you to finally move on.”

### Meaning

For the most part, this card concerns Judgement of the self. The questioner may fear their past and be full of regret or resentment for things they did, or even those activities and things they did not. They may lament their actions or behaviour, and this may, in some way, be holding them back from achieving complete peace.

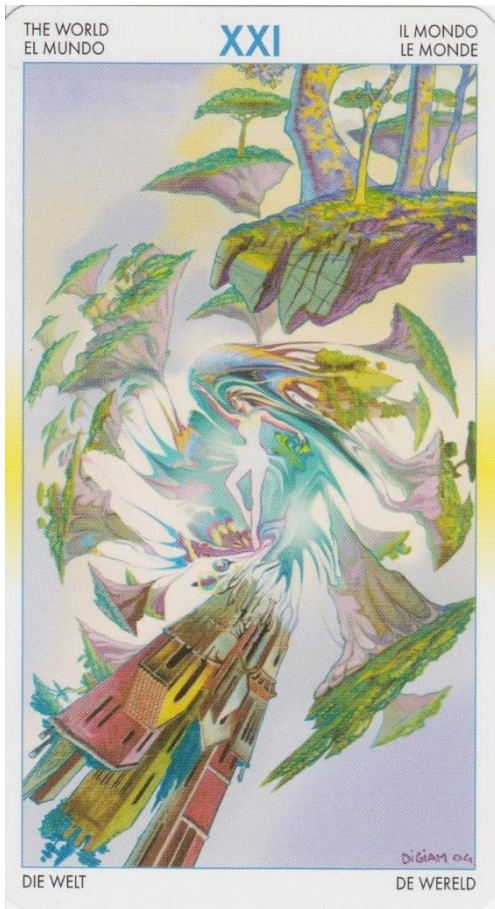
The advice is, like the Sun card, fairly simple: it is time to move on. The questioner has to accept that whatever it is that they did or did not do is now confined to the past. It is completely and

utterly unable to be changed and, thus, the questioner should feel no sorrow. This is not to say that they should forsake their emotions and ignore them, rather they should learn from their mistakes and move on. They should take the lessons and seek future improvement. After all, dwelling on the past with no concern for the future breeds depression. This card indicates that the questioner should, or will, overcome that final psychological obstacle which is restricting their freedom, metaphorically or literally. Give it up, to put another way.

In a more unlikely sense this card can, of course, concern the perceived Judgement the questioner may feel that they are receiving from others. In this scenario, it is best to look at the imagery in the card: the spirits are unconcerned with the viewer and, likewise, others are possibly unconcerned with the questioner. In a realistic sense, it is worth noting that we often know more about ourselves than others, yet we still expect external individuals to know just as much about our behaviour as we do. Fortunately, memory is not so concise, and it is worth noting that that of which the questioner feels they are being

judged for may not be even in the forefront of exogenous minds. In fact, it is more than likely that others feel as though they are being judged for things that the questioner has no idea about, yet they think that they do. In this sense, then, this is a card that is, again, about letting go. There is nothing else that you can do concerning the past and all that you can really do is use such knowledge to influence your future behaviour. Even if others are judging, let them. There is nothing they can do except work towards a better reputation in the future. The questioner should, therefore, be encouraged to ignore others and live life how they wish. In essence, the message from this card is simple: let go, and improve.

## XXI – The World



*“The Metamorphoses of Reality. The being that has achieved complete self-awareness. You have the great task of transforming the World, simply discovering that it is reflecting your image like a large mirror. Transform yourself.”*

### The Fool’s Journey

So, the Fool has learned much on his journey. He fought for the material world, transcended the immaterial

world to improve his psyche, was brought into confusion by the spiritual world and, finally, forced to confront the past by Judgement. “Where do I go from here?” speak the Fool to himself as he is walking down a long and lonely path. “I have achieved everything that I wanted to achieve. I have brought about physiological and psychological peace and harmonized wants and needs, so what next?”

The ground suddenly begins to shake beneath his feet, and the Fool falls to the ground. His mind is invaded by the thoughts of the World. A million ideas stream through his psyche filling him with every emotion from dread to euphoria. Everything that could be, or has been, surges through his consciousness with furore.

Without warning the Fool’s very essence is torn apart. His ego is mangled, and his body warped. A single idea begins to consume the Fool’s mind. He wonders.

Before long the numerous parts of the Fool that were ripped to shreds are reassembled and he is standing at the edge of a cliff. Behind him a wolf growls and the Fool realises he has returned to when he came.; a Fool once more.

### **Meaning**

The final unique card of the Major Arcana the World is a signal of completion. It indicates that everything is right in the world, but unlike the Sun, it is also a herald of new beginnings.

We can see from the illustration that a strong, stable structure is being torn apart and reassembled into a new path. Likewise, the questioner may find that once they have completed their aims, they may find new ideas and new passions fill their mind. The constant desire to change, to experience and learn more about the world, is a uniquely human trait. The questioner should be encouraged that, despite arriving at the end of one journey, new roads will open up. When they do, they should once again allow their intuition to guide them so that they may expand their consciousness further.

Moreover, although the following card is once again The Fool, the questioner should be reminded that they survived the journey once, or more, and will, likewise, survive the journey once more. A positive card, the ultimate herald of change, this is perhaps my favourite of the deck.

# The Wands



## Ace of Wands



*“The root of metamorphosis. The beginning of a renewal and the impetus that pushes towards action and changing oneself and the surrounding environment.”*

On this card, we see an arguably androgynous figure in apparent agony, with their arms bound to their side, sprouting forth from the ground.

On face value, this card is one that represents new passions and new desires. The figure is painfully eager to

be free from her incarceration and be allowed to roam the alien landscape.

Their androgyny indicates that this new passion, whether it be a new idea, or a new relationship or a new whatever it is, is in the early stages of development. It is like a foetus in a womb: neither one sex or the other until later in the pregnancy. Likewise, their new pastime is still flailing about looking for a path upon which to travel – one moment it seems set in stone before a new concept comes along and turns it in a new direction. This lack of solidity, however, is favourable as it allows for them to gather a vast array of information before settling on a path. Although there is a spark flying from their subconscious, it is yet to set anything aflame in their conscious mind.

One thing worth noting is the barely perceptible demon-like forms that make up the shadows of the illustrated individuals hair. Indeed, there is also the hint of carnivorous plants in the background. This could merely indicate one of two things.

Firstly, that they are struggling with the voices in their head, so to speak. Those niggling doubts and rapid-fire thoughts

that follow new passions and also those that prevent firm foundations from being put in place with any great haste. It could serve as a warning to not get too caught up in the details and instead rather just choose a path and commit to it.

Conversely, it could indicate naivety, in that they are treading new and unfamiliar ground – an often scary situation which involves a vast amount of new information to absorb and numerous new voices to be heard, which it should be noted can sometimes be hostile. Whether this will result in a positive outcome, or whether their experience of the world they are stepping into will lead to unpleasantness, is to be decided. However, it is worth reassuring the questioner by mentioning that new ground is often better than old ground, even if it invokes anxiety initially. If their curiosity ends up burning them, then it was at least worth the try at being reborn anew.

## Two of Wands



*“The equilibrium of change. The ability to synthesize that guarantees innovation as well as possible dissatisfaction in spite of changes.”*

In this card, we see a lake-dwelling wooden humanoid figure resting in the water. On the top of his head crawls a chameleon, while on this hand feeds a hummingbird.

Like most of the twos, this card also represents a duality of choices. Presumably, the man featured on this

card is an old woodland creature that exists to nurture nature. He still has a choice, however. Does he continue to grow lush grass and sprout new branches to create a home for the chameleon, or does he instead continue to fester swamp-based tubular plants to provide sustenance for the birds? Neither choice is likely going to make him feel unfulfilled since both result in a desirable outcome, but he maybe doesn't have the ability to do both.

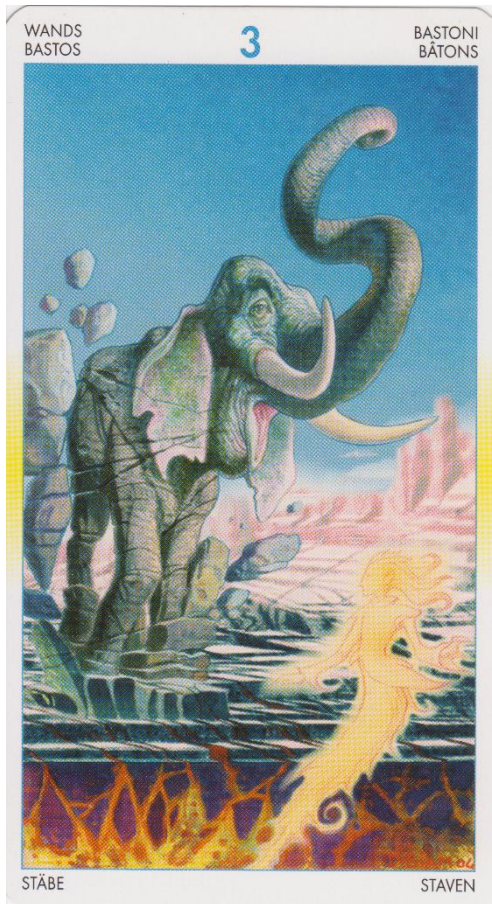
This card, then, is one about choice. About having to choose between two things, two passions, of which they have potentially not the time or resources to invest in both. It is a card that represents a burning desire to make their mark on the world in a positive way. They may have potentially numerous ideas on how they could achieve this noble goal, but either undertaking would require their full attention. It is a card that represents that the questioner is at a proverbial fork in the road, not quite knowing what direction to take. It is worth noting that either path is likely to satisfy their desires and needs and that they are not likely to regret any decision they make – only that they did not have the power to do both.

This card can also represent a need to reach out and associate with other people to bring about their dichotomous dreams. It may be that by modifying the world or their circumstance in a certain way that they can accomplish all of their desires, if not entirely by themselves. If this is the case, then so be it.

Either way, if anything this card does tell us is that they should not take the middle ground since neither goal is likely to be completed correctly. Neither the bird nor the chameleon would be satisfied with half a habitat, and neither would likely be in the mood to wait around. Thus, it indicates that the questioner should pick sooner rather than later and invest all their energy in making their chosen path work. Either road ought to be followed with vigour, and not with indifference.



## Three of Wands



*“The tenacity in renewal. The desire that becomes the wish for transmutation. Creativity and self-confidence.”*

In this card, we see a stone elephant charging headstrong towards a light sprite which is sprouting forth from the magma beneath his feet.

All in all, this is a relatively straightforward card to interpret. Elephants, not just those made of stone, are often strong, resourceful and confidence creatures. The intensity and

vigour with which he strides towards the sprite would likely indicate that the questioner is themselves feeling self-assured and proud of their abilities. They may feel blessed of their capabilities and are likely charging fearlessly into a new situation or experience.

This card does, however, carry with it a warning if drawn in the present or future positions. Although the elephant pictured is robust and courageous just beneath the surface lies extreme danger. For the elephant, it is the heat of molten rock that could destroy everything he has, for the questioner it could be some external factor that could blindside them and knock the wind out of their stride.

The sprite on this card acts as a sort of warning sign. Despite the fact that danger lurks in the shadows, there will be clear and distinct signals advising caution. Whether these will be direct signals, such as someone informing them to be careful, or indirect signals, like the early signs of stress, is yet to be decided.

What this card does tell us though is that there will be signals and although

the questioner may feel on top of the world at present, they had best keep one ear open and take defensive manoeuvres as soon as even there is even the slightly inkling of trouble. The result if they do not is simple: they'll get burned.

## Four of Wands



*“The sacred enclosure of metamorphosis. Material and mental structure that permits fruitful alterations.”*

On this card, we see a lightly coloured winged angelic creature entrapped by the messy branches of four young, leafless trees.

While three creates stability, four adds additional support. In this card, we see four trees coming together in harmony to create a solid enclosure in which to



trap an angel. This card could, therefore, represent that there is not only strength in numbers but that ideas and conceptions – in this case, a prison – are beginning to solidify into concrete actions. It may indicate that while the night is still young, so to speak, everything is there ready to capture something grand.

The questioner may, therefore, have formed the foundations that will serve their purposes moving forwards or, alternately, they may have begun to see the fruits of their passionate labour. Like how trees take the time to grow their actions may have been slow and precise but that ultimately as the wheel of time moves forwards everything has fallen into place.

The trees could also represent that they have worked with others in harmony for the benefit of a grander goal – the flora pictured would not have been able to construct an enclosure without in some way communicating – even if psychically. Thus, the questioner may thus be beginning to see the results of a community project or joint collaborations.

In another light, if we assume the angel itself represents the questioner, then it may be a case of ensuring that they do not get too caught up in their pursuit – lest they become entrapped by it. Such a situation would eventually breed resentfulness as passions fade into overbearing and potentially unwanted commitments – after all, they may not have been prepared for such an occurrence.

On the other hand, we can see the prison as less of a prison and more of a cocoon. If the questioner is pursuing their passions and has built up sturdy foundations, then this card could represent that they are coming up to the time where they are ready to take the next big step and transition into something new, something better. To take extremes: it could mean marriage in a relationship, a new more prestigious job when pursuing a new career, or even just crossing the line from hobbyist to professional. Whatever it is this card indicates that plans and ideas are coming to fruition.

## Five of Wands



*“The challenge of change. Competition between contrasting desires of change. Resolvable problems.”*

In this card, we see a long legged tall man glancing back as he wanders through a dense forest alone.

This card is about little more than seeing the forest for the trees. From the perspective of the man pictured there is an abundance of foliage and branches clouding his view. He may be glancing around disorientated and confused, but

if he were to duck down, then he would be able to see a path out of the forest and, most of all, clear his vision of all the clutter he witnesses at that moment. Likewise, the questioner might be advised to change their view to see a path out of the dilemma they are facing.

Regarding meaning, it can indicate a need to take a step back from their passion or project and take a look around to see if there is an easier, simpler way of moving forward. It can represent the fact that at current or in the past or future they may be feeling lost and discombobulated, facing difficult times financially, spiritually or emotionally, in which there doesn't seem to be a clear way out.

Alternatively, it could signal that they've become so enveloped in, so consumed by, their pursuits that they have lost track of the original goal and become, in a way, lost in the woods.

Unlike when they began they've maybe lost sight of the path that the questioner felt was laid out before them and now they find themselves off track, without a map, and looking at a busy and confusing muddle of information and options. They may feel hopeless or

fearful that their connundry cannot easily be resolved.

If this is the case, then as with the former, it is best advised that they attempt to change their perspective. Perhaps not is such an extreme way as the Hanged Man would indicate, but rather take a rest, a week or more off perhaps, to sit down and once again see the trunks of the trees. Only then can they hope to seek a way out of their dazzling circumstances. Only by changing their view of the situation can they expect to discover a solution.

## Six of Wands



*“The metamorphosis of the warrior. Resourcefulness. Mental tranquillity in the face of difficulties.”*

On this card, we see a humanoid butterfly cast in darkness standing before an enormous stone wall. On said wall rests two opposing faces, one cast in slightly more light than the other. The sprite is moving off to the right-hand side, perhaps following some otherworldly guidance.

The little white book that accompanies this deck alludes to the fact that the beings carved from stone are warriors, with their sculpture being indicative of success and fame. Such stone structures naturally take a vast amount of time to construct, and it is a task that would not have undertaken lightly. Thus, this card can indicate that the fruits of the questioner's labour are beginning to make a lasting impact on their lives, and perhaps the lives of others – a noble feat that is likely to live on in people's memories, if not literally in granite.

We should, however, take a moment to take in the meaning of the butterfly that is treading carefully through the water. They appear to gaze up at the rightmost face and are presumably “choosing” that side over the other. Thus, this can be a card that represents a choice between two ways of doing things: each of which has a long history of success – a way has been written in stone over time. In a way, it is a card that echoes the Two of Wands in that there is a mirage of choices, and either is likely to be legitimate.

This card in particular, however, tells us two things: first of all, that there is no middle ground. Despite both paths being

well tread and recorded in history, the questioner has no option but to take one or the other. Second of all both paths may from the outset seem similar, but each has its subtle uniquenesses - in the same way that both effigies pictured are similar, but in the slightest of ways distinct.

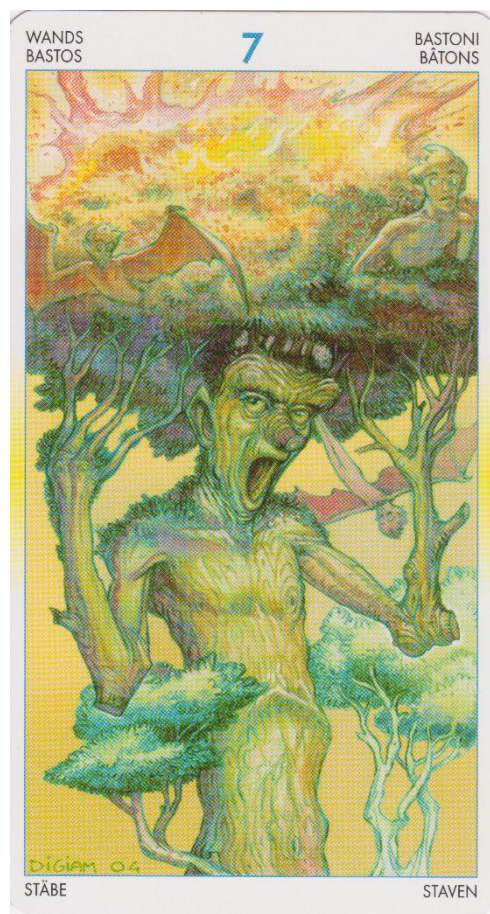
On top of this, the butterfly has seemingly chosen a path. This may indicate that the questioner has already begun making inroads down a particular route. Like the butterflies, however, they are maybe in the early stages of action and so still possess the option to turn back. If the questioner can see ahead and enjoys the view, then they should be encouraged to continue. On the other hand, if they are unhappy with their decision there is still time to take another trail, it not too late to turn back.

Lastly, the card itself can carry a rather subtle warning: don't innovate. The road to success is the same path that the Warriors took – a road well-trodden. It is often better to stick with proven, reliable methods of travel rather than attempting to get off the beaten path. Moreover, although unusual paths can also lead to success in a new and exciting



way it does not carry with it the same degree of security.

## Seven of Wands



*“The obstacles of metamorphosis. Conflicts and disputes hinder certain changes but lead to others that are more suitable.”*

With this card, we see a rather distressed Ent whose “hair” – the leaves of his branches – are infected with a malevolent bat and seemingly benevolent goblin. To top it all off it appears that he is also on fire.

This is a card about conflict – both internal and external. Internally the



creatures that have made their home in the Ent's hair represent the voices in his head – and the questioner's head. Those quiet and mischievous self-depreciating vs. self-assuring voices that are in a Sisyphean struggle to become the dominant ruling force.

The questioner may, therefore, be suffering from some minor, or major, psychological ailments that, although merely a part of human life, are wearing down at their ability to function in some respect. However, like the tree whose leaves are consumed and then regrow, it is likely that they will bounce back, so to speak, and eventually find a reasoned and logical solution to their problem which will allow them room to grow and thrive once again. Despite the fact that they are undergoing internal conflict it will eventually pass, and order and harmony will once again return.

In the second major element of this card, we see a fire burning above his crown. This represents external conflict. So not only are they struggling with endogenous confusion, but they also have the weight of their world leaning down on their shoulders, only serving to intensify the pressure.

This card, then, tells us that the questioner must either do one of two things. Either they resolve their internal conflicts, or at least come to a temporary ceasefire so that they can concentrate on battling the real exogenous problem that threatens to burn them, and everything they have grown to become, down to the ground back where they started. Alternately they can act decisively to combat an external headache so they can focus on gathering their thoughts. The former is likely to be easier, but either requires significant and quick action to prevent tragedy befalling them. It is, then, a card that represents extreme conflict and upheaval, but one which, although threatening to turn them into ash, creates a clearing where new ideas and thoughts can begin to flourish.

## Eight of Wands



*“Quick change. High speed energy that produces sudden changes. Travel.”*

Pictured on this card is a river of magma in front of a backdrop of numerous erupting volcanoes. Seven lava-birds are seen hovering above.

The key feature of this card is energy: the rapid, explosive energy that volcanoes produce and the swift all-encompassing changes they cause. Indicative of hectic and even cluttered life, this card chiefly represents that the

questioner may be feeling that they are going through a turbulent time in which they perhaps don't have complete control over the outcome. Much like the unpredictability of volcanoes, their life, their passions, their careers, or whatever it may be, may be moving forward with such chaotic haste that they feel as if they are more a passenger than a driver. The river indicates that they are stuck in rapids with no way out of the flames. The dark ash clouds above serve as a warning that dark times lay ahead and that famine and pestilence may sweep through their lives without mercy.

Regarding whether this is a good thing? It depends on numerous aspects of the questioners life and psyche. Were they comfortable and happy with their life? If so, then a revolution is perhaps not welcomed. On the other hand, if they felt that their life was stagnating or even just simply tedious, then this extra injection of life may breed excitement and, above all, new ideas and new passions – after all, fire is the element of strong desire. The winged creatures pictured would certainly indicate something along these lines – they are after all a new form of life, a new order,

born out of the lawless pandemonium that is inherent to an erupting landscape.

As an addendum it is worth noting that this card can also represent a hint of courage – the questioner may be feeling that they are entering a dark and lawless place of chaos and disorder, but it may be the case that they infiltrate with their heads held high ready to tame the beasts of the wilderness. In a way, then, it can be indicative of a psychological or physical strength which can rustle up the courage to bring about substantial structures from anarchy.

## Nine of Wands



*“Before metamorphosis. The accumulation of energy that precedes great metamorphosis. Desires that were unclear until now are realized.”*

In this card, we see a brightly lit tree adorned with a nine perfectly spherical bubbles each containing a foetus ready to be born.

The message with this card initially seems obvious: new ideas will spring into life. However, in the great story that is the wands, it can represent that the

questioner is coming to the end of their fiery, passionate journey. The world they naively stepped into in the beginning is finally starting to make sense. Those numerous and scattered ideas that they have toiled on for so long are preparing to be born. They may then be ready to move on, away from the questioner, to grow into something unique and extraordinary – ready to be sent out into the world to blossom into something of their own.

To put another way this card can also represent that they are so close to what they want – on the very cusp of finally getting what they dreamt of when they first set out on their journey. It is a signal that the fruits of their labour are about to become something truly marvellous.

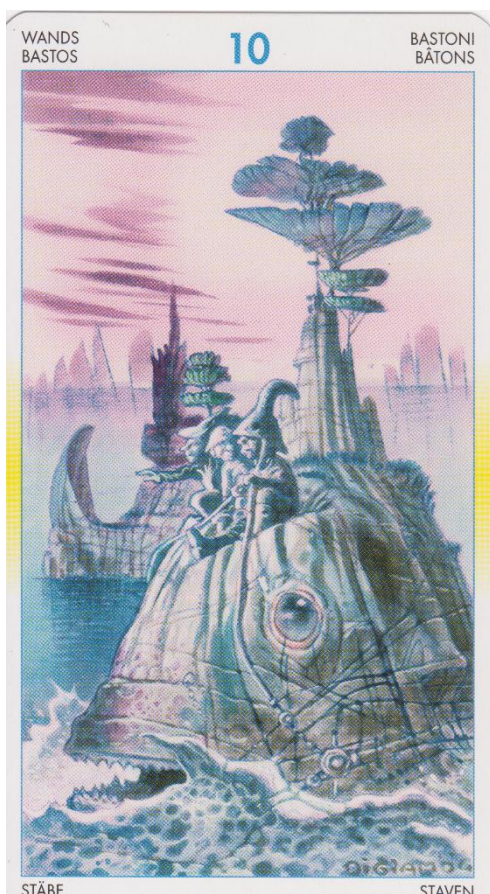
Alternatively, it may be a case that they have many well-formed but immature ideas that are just waiting for their chance to be born. For example, if the questioner is seeking a new career then this card can be indicative of them having a vast array of exquisite well thought out plans, but little in the way of action. It may indicate, however, that the time is now right to take that final leap and let one of their theoretical

schemes become a reality. It can also hint at the fact that if they do not make the decision themselves then, like how a mother cannot choose the time of their child's birth, fate herself may intervene and make the decision for them. If that is the case, then they may later down the line end up regretting not taking the chance to change their path before having it changed for them.

In an entirely pragmatic sense, this card can also represent the incredibly obvious: they can expect a new child, or pet, at some time in the future.



## Ten of Wands



*“The worries of change. Excessive concentration of forces. The oppression that could derive from it. Waste of time and energy.”*

On this darkly coloured card, we see three apparent gnomes riding a giant and gleeful rock-whale through calm seas. The trolls appear to be at the helm, controlling the golem, with perceptible chains running from beneath its eyes to their hands.

This card can be taken to have multiple meanings. In the first instance, it can indicate that the questioner, like the gnomes, has tamed some unwieldy beast and are using it to carve out a future path for themselves. This may be something as simple as taking control of their psyche and changing a bad habit, to something more drastic such as developing a new career for themselves. It represents that they have, above all, control and dominance over their situation and, although the weather may currently be fair, they can use this newfound power to ride out any future storms.

On the other hand, as the little white booklet may suggest, it can represent the very opposite of this – and it is worth probing the questioner to determine what interpretation is best.

They may have control, like the gnomes, but, also like the gnomes, there are perhaps many individuals striving to be the one to exert influence on their questioner path – they may be the driver, but they might not be the navigator.

Even so, life is about cooperating and although optimistically we could argue



that they are working together with others for their benefit, and this card may indeed suggest this, we could also claim that three (or more) is a crowd. Yes, they may get to where they are going, but it is not a path that is dictated by their volition. They may be being pushed or driven down a different route than the one that they would ideally like to take. If this is the case, the questioner will do well to wrestle back control and guide themselves through life.

On the other hand, if we take the questioner to be represented by the giant fish then his gaze upward is perhaps representative of excessive concern with their thoughts. They may feel lost and dazed and ultimately driven by their subconscious. It may be the case that they rely too heavily on emotion over reason, or vice versa, and would, therefore, best be advised to find a sort of middle ground moving forward.

Essentially, however, whether you take the questioner to be the gnomes or the fish one thing is certain. As I mentioned before the seas are calm and tranquil – so it is likely that they are finding things somewhat easy at current. Their path, if they are happy with it, is one that they would be best encouraged to continue –

regardless of whether or not emotion motivates them, or reason or some exogenous influence pushing them down some given avenue. The sailing will be smooth either way.

Regarding the suit of wands itself, the ten represents completion. They have reached the pinnacle of their passionate drive and are perhaps looking elsewhere for excitement. Although they exert some influence over their affairs and are holding the reigns, it may be time to move on to new pastures. That chapter of their life is over, and it is an excellent opportunity to light a new flame and, thus, return to the Ace of Wands.

## Knave of Wands



*"The herald of change. New outlooks."*

A relatively basic card, this one. We merely see a fire spirit bursting forth from a lava vent.

As the subtitle suggests, this is a card about change. From the solid molten rock to the wisp of pure energy this card signifies that old foundations and old structures are going to give birth to new life. This may not necessarily change the old ways of doing things, but instead,

will give it a new character and ability to modify reality.

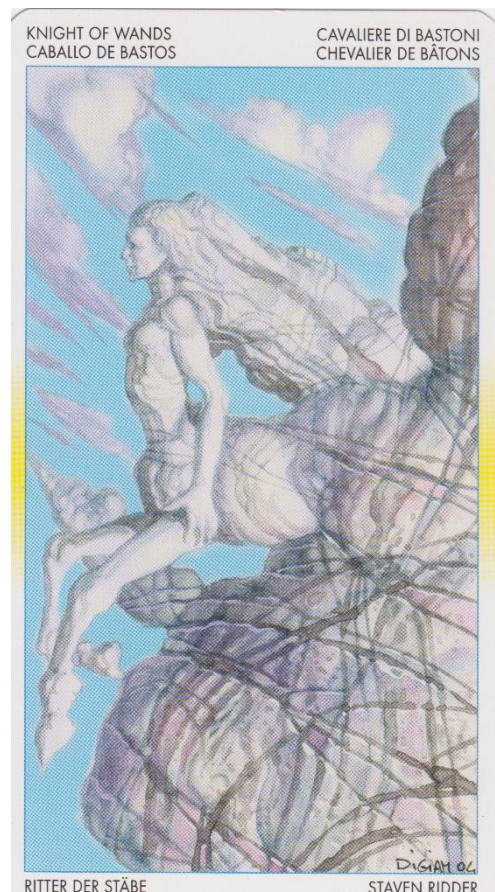
It represents the fact that an old environment, such as that ancient stone magma, will undergo a drastic or chaotic change in a positive and beneficial way. Whether it is the result of innovations, new ideas or even just simply a change of paint, there will be an injection of excitement and a breath of new life. This can naturally lead to significant changes that will alter the questioner's life in a permanent way.

With this card, it is also worth noting the extended crown of the being pictured. This can be indicative of psychological or spiritual transformations. Whatever old habits or thoughts they may have will, as mentioned above, undergo a frenzied shift into something new. This may be the result of new discoveries, new ideas, and passions or just simple changes in their material states – i.e. wealth breeding elation. They may fall in love with someone or something that will ultimately have a profound impact on their life. Whatever it is, this card precedes it.

On a more ominous note this card, following on from the Ten of Wands, which represents completion, can be indicative of changes upsetting the balance. Although new life can be an intensely positive force, it can also be disharmonious. After all the old way of doing things, the old magma-driving lifeblood is the specific way of doing things for a reason.

For example, if the questioner runs a successful business it could on one hand be positive, in that there will be a spurt of innovation that will increase profits. On the contrary, it can be negative, in that there will be a significant event that could upset the equilibrium driving customers away – it could, for instance, represent innovations in their given industry, rather than in their company, that would affect their bottom line in the long term. Either way, the warning is less pronounced than in other cards, but it is something the questioner should be mindful of: change is not always a good thing, and this card certainly heralds change but says nothing of its alignment.

## Knight of Wands



*“Impulsive energies in motion. Possible trips.”*

This card pictures a female stone centaur carved from what appears to be a cliff-face.

Similar to the Knave of Wands this is a card about the first movement. Once again it is a card that tells us that the old way of doing things will change. Unlike the Knave of Wands, however, it is a card that more reliably signifies that

it will be in their life that the changes will occur.

Under the assumption that the centaur is the questioner we can see that they are a capable and robust character who is connected deeply to the earth – the foundations of some element of their life. Whatever happens, they are ultimately bound to it and inseparable from it, despite having a distinct character of their own.

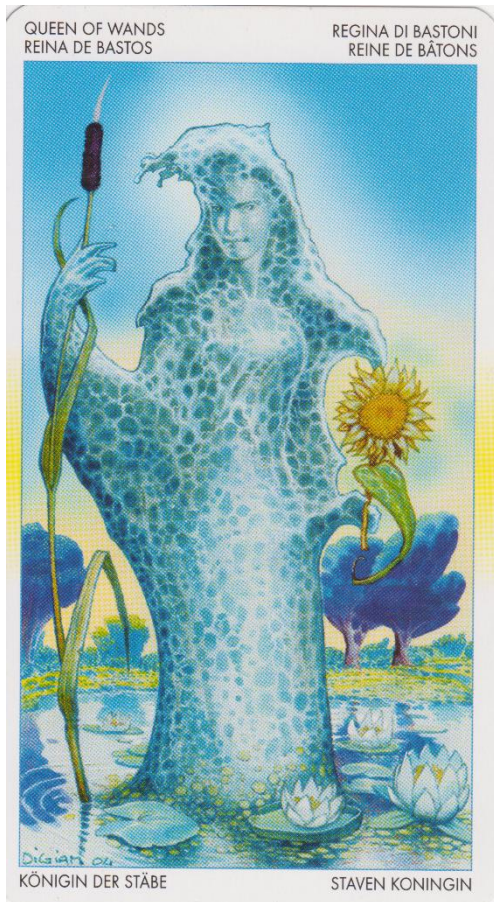
All that changes is that they adapt to changing circumstances. The weather on this card is prominently featured and with time erodes the cliff more and more so that the figure illustrated becomes more developed and salient. This is a card, then, that indicates that the questioner is firmly committed to something, and may indeed be utterly entwined with it, but when given enough time it will develop into something special. Although they may feel bound to it, for better or worse, as they rough the weather they will, like this cliff face, erode and break free - thus moving forward.

This card can also, like the previous in the set, be a herald of change. The centaur is clearly in motion so it would

signify that although they may feel deeply attached to something they are, indeed, advancing down the path that they have set out for themselves, and although the going may be slow and even lackadaisical, they *are* moving and haven't, despite appearance, stagnated. It is then a card about patience, about how things will change eventually.



## Queen of Wands



*“Pragmatic, generous woman.  
Successful desired metamorphosis.”*

The poster child for the Tarot of Metamorphosis, this card holds a distinctly positive meaning. In it, we see a robed woman formed from water. Basked in the warm sunlight, she is holding a reed in one hand and a sunflower in the other.

The first thing to note with this card is that the illustrated being is made of water – the essential lifeblood to every

conscious being on earth. This then can clearly represent that the questioner has indeed metamorphosed into something hugely beneficial and valuable to those around her, and the world itself. It represents that they feed life in a positive way: allowing new ideas and conditions to thrive and prosper.

Just like the flora pictured, without the questioner, other people’s lives and the world around them would be much bleaker. It is a card that represents selflessness and charity, as well as reliability and trustworthiness – they are the driving force behind tremendous changes.

In the story of the questioner’s life, this can also represent psychological wellbeing. A harmonious state where all the elements needed to be a near-perfect human being is in place. A state where selfishness, the desire to survive, is balanced with selflessness, the ability to allow others to use what you do not need. After all, on one end of the spectrum if the woman pictured was entirely selfless then she would dry up as the plants feed to fuel their growth. This is to say that selflessness is noble, but it damages the being.



On the other end, pure selfishness would prevent the plants from ever growing in the first place. It is then, a card of tempered generosity that allows them to serve the world for the duration of their life without shortening it significantly.

The card also has an air of joy about it and so, therefore, may indicate that the questioner is exactly where they want to be at the moment. Although things change, passions morph and people move on, at present, they are happy and content. They can perhaps see the fruits of their labour and are proud of their continuing legacy. They may feel on top of the world, ecstatic even, and can only feel good moving forward.

The only potential warning associated with this card is that they should ensure that the equilibrium is not upset – that the sun or plants do not consume more than their share. For example, it might be wise to keep an eye out for those who would seek to take advantage of their happiness and generosity. As opposed to numerous others such a message is not particularly pronounced so, for the most part, it is best to err on the positive side of things.

## King of Wands



*“Man with strong character and dignity. Period of great power that precedes change.”*

This card shows a great crowned Ent sitting on top of a sturdy stone throne. He holds in his hand a smaller tree, grasping it tightly.

With this card, we first have to consider the environment shown: a semi-desolate rock paradise – an inhospitable place for trees to grow, no doubt. This can, therefore, indicate that the

questioner has conquered all external factors that hindered them during their journey. They have set up shop, so to speak, in a place where no one thought that it was possible to. Regarding careers, this can mean that they are punching above their weight. Regarding relationships, it can indicate that they've weathered tough times and come out the other side stronger. It is a card that is ultimately indicative of success against all the odds.

The smaller bush he holds can directly represent, again, conquest. They perhaps hold power over others and have dominated in some given field – academically, financially, romantically, whatever it is they've won the war and reign victorious.

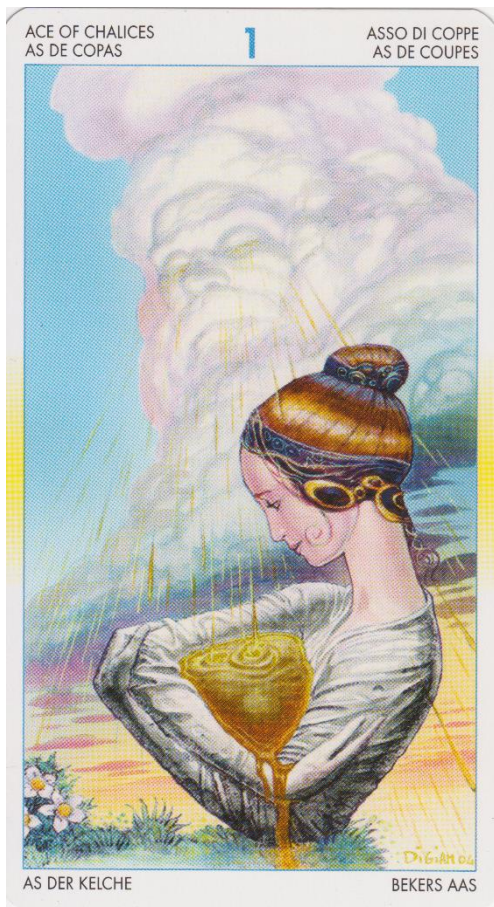
It is the last card in the suit of Wands and so, therefore, can be taken to mean that the questioner is at the end of their journey. If you remember back to the Ace of Wands, they were breaking free, being born, into an unfriendly alien land. That land is now completely under their command. Psychologically they are proud and perhaps even slightly

egotistical, but they have a right to be. With all the knowledge and skills they've acquired and developed, they could rightfully be called a master.

The time is then right, perhaps, to start fresh and move into new lands. The cold stone pictured could represent that they have nothing left to gain in continuing down that path. It is now a good moment to move to greener pastures, into new passions or fields of interest so that they can further pursue their emotional and spiritual development. Indeed, this card can be seen as a warning against not transitioning into new areas. The gravel cannot sustain them any longer. Although they can linger on, sitting on their throne full of pride they, like the Ent illustrated, will eventually need something more. In the case of the tree, it would be food and water, for the questioner it might be stimulation or excitement. The Badlands hold nothing for them anymore – it is rightfully a time to move on lest they stagnate, starve and die. It is thus a card that signals the desperate need for change, for better or for worse.

# The Chalice

## Ace of Chalices



*"The source of metamorphosis. Metamorphosis of the vital source. The beginning of a creative phase of change. The creative force of love. (Myth of Zeus and Danae)."*

On this card, we see a large cloud raining down upon a woman who is attempting to capture some of the golden liquid in her arms.

The Myth of Danae, to summarize, posits that Zeus desired the Princess Danae, who at the time was imprisoned

to prevent her from conceiving a child. To fulfil his lust, Zeus rained down upon her cell and consequently impregnated her. She later gave birth to the legendary monster-slayer Perseus.

Like most of the Aces, this card signifies that a major idea or concept is starting to develop, but as of yet there is no action. We see Danae attempting to capture the rain which was, of course, the start of something grand – namely the consequential epic of Perseus. It is a card about the questioner taking the first steps to snatch out and catch an intuitive idea that has fallen into their lap, or mind more appropriately.

More specifically, as we are talking about the suit of Chalices, it is likely to be an idea that involves either creativity or romance. In the former this card can represent prodromal artistic desires, such as the need to paint, write or compose a great work of the imagination - or at the very least they have the slightest feeling of wanting to perform such an act. In the later it can signify that they are just beginning to fall in love with someone, or perhaps they've just simply past by someone who makes their heart flutter.

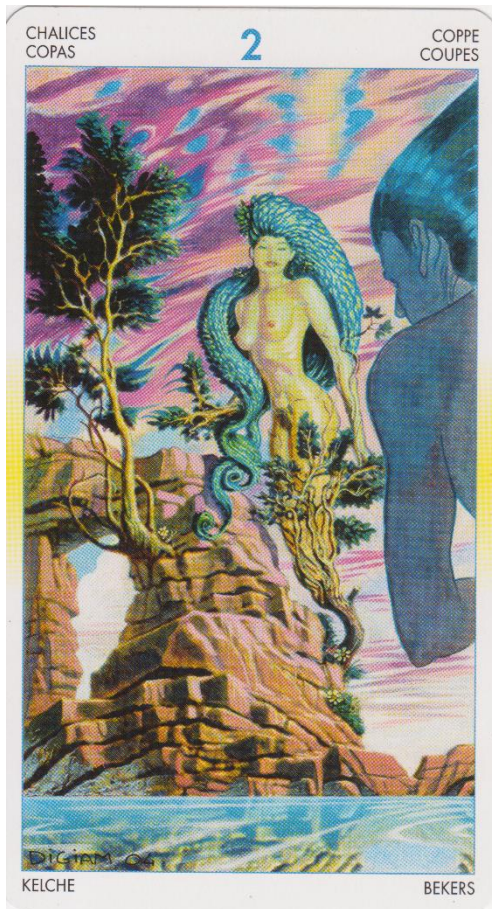


Back to the former, like Danae attempting to capture the rain, they have a great desire to create – to meld the spiritual imagination, represented by Zeus, with physical reality, depicted by the weather. They potentially have the wish to carve out a unique piece of art that is not only something that is intently meaningful to themselves, but also to the world as a whole. They have the desire to cradle something in their arms so that they can say “I made that!”

There is a warning associated with this card. We note how the rain is escaping Danae’s clutches. This can signify that whatever idea or thought they have unless the questioner takes preventative steps to either act on it or protect it, they will ultimately lose their strangle on it. The moment will escape their grasp, so to speak, and it will return to whence it came. It is thus a card that should encourage the questioner to run with their feelings - their intuition - and not to look back. To put another way, they should endeavour to live life in the moment, to allow themselves to be taken hostage by the higher emotions that up until that point may have been kept closely guarded and controlled. The desire to create something from

nothing, from a mere spark of the imagination, is a uniquely human trait and shouldn’t be tucked out of the way – it should be, naturally, expressed. This is what this card represents.

## Two of Chalices



*"The union of changes. The desire that leads to casting one's own metamorphosis onto another. We accept and love ourselves through this love. (Myth of Apollo and Daphe)"*

In this card, we see a darkly lit man wading towards a rocky outcrop on the shore. On the arch sits a nude half-tree woman.

The woman is, of course, Daphe of the Greek legends. She, having been shot by a lead arrow from the God of Love - Eros

(Cupid) – fled in desperation from a man she was fated to abhor: Apollo. He, on the other hand, after invoking the rage of Eros, was shot with a golden arrow causing him to fall deeply in love with Daphe. He subsequently chased her through the lands falling ever more deeply in love with every glimpse. Tired and weak, Daphe eventually called out to her father, Penus, to save her. Penus consequently turned her into a tree so that she could escape Apollo, who next used his powers of immortality to ensure that she never withered and died.

So, all that being said, how does it relate to an interpretation of this card. Well, the first thing to note is the intense desire Apollo has for something which abhors him. This could just represent that the questioner is chasing a lost cause. Whether this is indeed about relationships or anything else such as careers or health, it merely indicates that they are lusting for something that will never reciprocate the feelings. In a way then the questioner may feel as though they are wasting their energy, so to speak, and although they may inch closer with every step the feeling is not mutual. That person or thing that they feel for won't love them back, that job

you love will never provide you with what you need, and so on.

On the other hand, if it is the case that the questioner seems to be represented by the protagonist Daphe then it is an indication that they are perhaps running away from something which would provide them with exactly what they subconsciously desire. This again need not be a relationship, but something as simple as art. For example, the questioner may actively dislike painting, or writing, or drawing, but they may find that should they take the time to indulge in it then they may grow to enjoy it. In fact, this card can represent that the best way to express their thoughts or emotions is to come at them from an angle that they have up unto this point been incredibly reluctant to try. In the myth of Daphe and Apollo, the Ent-form of Daphe is eventually remarkably grateful for the gift of immortality. Likewise, the questioner may ultimately find a massive upside to their work or actions that outweigh their initial disdain. It may provide them with meaning or purpose that satisfies their instinctual desire to be something or someone - they just need

to get past that initial hatred and allow themselves to accept a great gift.

It is a card then that in one respect acts as a warning – a warning not to go chasing something which refuses to return the love. It can be a card that indicates that that of which they are infatuated with isn't in fact what they need. Their hobbies, for instance, may provide them with pleasure, but they may not seem to love them back, so to speak, which can only lead to feelings of hollowness in the long term as the initial emotional attraction fades. This can, of course, related to more than just hobbies. They should, then, be advised to seek other avenues which may provide them with what they are truly looking for – that gift that will never die.

To put more simply the questioner should look for passion, or purpose, or meaning, or whatever, where they least expect it because that of which they rejected may just provide them with the gift of immortality, metaphorically.

Finally, if we ignore the myth represented on this card and look at the image itself, then we note that it can easily describe the desperate journey through presumably rough sea to obtain

the object of their desire. It is a card that indicates that the questioner is willing to wade through uncharted lands, and through anything that life throws at them, to get what they want. It is indicative of someone who is both ambitious and relentless when they have their mind fixated on something, for better or worse. The advice would be that temperance is critical: their lust or greed driven hunt must not become their defining feature.

## Three of Chalices



*“The gift of renewal Celebration for a change that has taken place. Abundance and hope that renew the outlook on life. (Myth of Pygmalion and Galatea).*

In the Tarot of Metamorphosis, there are few cards with such an obvious meaning, at least when you first gaze upon it. This is a card about celebration and joy and abundance.

In it, we see a weathered man dancing contently with a rather surrealist figure. The obvious takeaway here is one of



happiness and utmost satisfaction. When we add in the doves and butterflies flying from compartment to compartment, we may rightfully assume that this is a card that denotes peace and tranquillity – a state of perfection. The name alone gives away a relatively big hint: three chalices for three friends celebrating. It may, therefore, represent that they exist in harmonious social relationships and are currently comfortable in the arms of their acquaintances.

Be careful, though, often “three’s a crowd”, and, indeed, there are warnings associated with this card. On one hand the scene is so whimsical that one might justly consider that it is merely a dream. Thus, it perhaps signifies caution and prudence during moments of euphoria. i.e. things might not be quite as they seem – that when things are going so well as to be dreamlike, they are probably too good to be true. It is a card that advises vigilance.

Furthermore, the lack of abject expression on the gentleman’s face could just represent that he is taking the moment in calmly, but it could also express doubt and uncertainty. Perhaps he is aware that he is merely dreaming,

maybe he understands that the moment will pass and that the joy could fade into sorrow and despair.

The myth that this card alludes to also hints at some darker undertones. In the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea, Pygmalion, a master sculptor, crafted his perfect woman out of ivory. After making an offering to Aphrodite – the Greek counterpart to the Roman goddess of love, Venus – he silently prayed for a bride that bore the likeness of his sculpture. Later he returned to his workshop. There he found that that very same sculpture had come to life, with which he then fell in love. This is the image we see on this card.

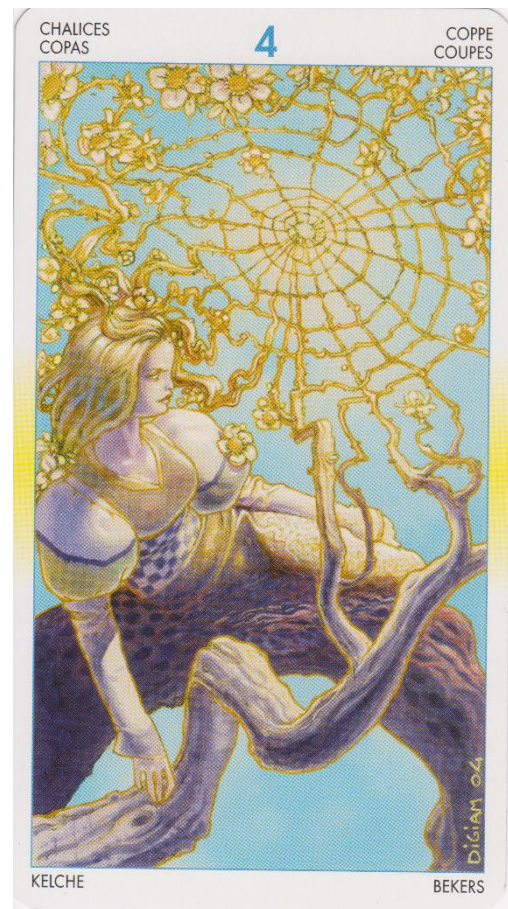
Regarding relationships, then, this card may be alluding to standards that are set too high. It may represent not only the joy and celebration we discussed earlier but also of – again – doubt. Be it of friends or lovers, this card signifies that they are shunning or pushing others away while waiting for a person of such impossible perfection to appear. It indicates that they should re-evaluate their social priorities.

On the other hand, in the more material world, it signifies that the questioner

has set themselves an impractical and borderline unachievable goal. Although they would no doubt erupt in ecstasy should the task at hand be accomplished - that their wildest dreams come true - it may require a miracle to occur. Instead, they are setting themselves up for a rough fall back to earth when they 'wake up', so to speak.

Taking a step back, however, and casting a more positive light on the myth of Pygmalion and Galatea, it is a card that could easily represent that they have accomplished an absurd feat. It signifies that the impossible has been made possible and the time to celebrate wildly has come. In a way then this card can be viewed with hope in that a distinct and unmistakable occurrence may have happened and that such an event will have lots of impact on the rest of their life – just like the existence of Galatea would have had on Pygmalion's life. It is a card that indicates success on the back of seemingly divine intervention, or just sheer luck, and that instead of being viewed with cautious optimism should instead be commemorated and used as a rock of strength moving forward.

## Four of Chalices



*“The web of changes. The apathy and fatigue of those who now feel the need for metamorphosis, sometimes in spite of successful change. (Myth of Arachne).”*

Pictured on this card is a woman whose hair is weaved, with the aid of a tree's branches, into a luscious cobweb.

Given that the netting is composed of the lady's hair we can conclude that this is a card that is primarily about spiritual or emotional traps. It is a card that

represents psychological difficulties that are impacting on the questioner's quality of life.

Regarding the suit of Chalice, this can be difficulties in achieving goals – a sort of emotional apathy and disinterest that occurs when passions are not accomplishing what they want them to achieve.

The card's advice then is simply to escape the trap – which is, in a way, obvious. To use the terminology of the deck, they must metamorphose into something new. Their emotional, spiritual or psychological barriers need to be transformed in an unspecified way so that they may continue forward with their life.

The woman pictured, representing Arachne, was eventually transmogrified into a spider, which is where they get their name. This transformation would initially be horrendous, but in the case of the illustration would allow her to escape her entrapment. After all, her hair is woven into the very fabric of the tree: she cannot move, by definition. The only way to escape is to transform.

Regarding the questioner, this can indicate that they reached a point where

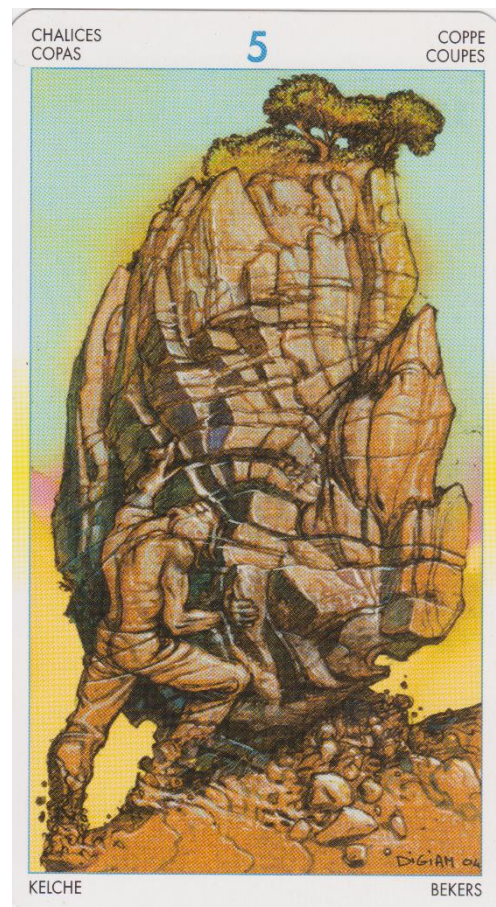
they can no longer proceed. They may feel bound by commitments or obligations that are in a way cornering them psychologically. The advice this card gives is that they need to break free from those chains and become something that they want to themselves to be. If they do not, then the warning would be that they will reach a spiritual impasse. The only way to proceed is to change, and the only way to change is to use your abilities to accomplish more than what they have. Arachne was turned into a spider precisely because, like a spider, she was a master weaver. Her transformation was not radical regarding skill sets: she possessed excellence in either case, but it was a conversion of spirit.

The questioner, then, needs to evaluate their psyche and look for a way to use their strengths in a different way. They may, for example, be a master painter but have reached a point where they are struggling to improve, which would cause anyone to feel disinterested. A skill they would have would perhaps be the ability to turn mere thoughts into physical crafts. This could apply to the other arts, such as sculpture. Should they take such a hobby up they may feel

refreshed and captivated once more and they would proceed down the road of spiritual development ever so slightly more.

In essence, it is a card about, as the little white booklet says, the desire to change. The card may tell us that change, although not inevitable, is utterly necessary.

## Five of Chalices



“The delusion of metamorphosis. The regret of changes unachieved because of carelessness or fear. Need to look ahead. (Myth of Sisyphus).”

Ah, the myth of Sisyphus – a man cursed to spend eternity bringing a boulder up a mountain only to have it fall back down to the bottom of the valley.

Whereas the Four of Chalices represents apathy and the feeling of emotional or spiritual immobility, this card tells us



that they have reached such a point. It is a card that indicates that the questioner is going around in circles, doing the same thing over and over again without any movement. Even more so than this, it is about how it is a desperate, deluded struggle.

This card then represents all those hugely negative emotions that feed into themselves: grief, despair, anxiety, paranoia, depression, regret – all those despicable feelings that make life miserable for the sufferer.

It is about more than just this, however. Sisyphus was highly focused on the moment: pushing that boulder, without looking ahead at the consequences. This it indicates the questioner has hit a brick wall, that they need to look past it, no matter how difficult it seems, and look forward to the future. Although Sisyphus does not see it, once he gets that boulder to the top of the mountain he has achieved something marvellous. Unfortunately for him it is rolled back down and he takes a knock psychologically.

Because of this, it can be seen as a card of resilience, in that the questioner has a deep desire, a deep drive, to keep on

toiling in the face of overwhelming odds and little hope. Unfortunately, this card does not offer much in the way of overt advice, so it is worth looking at additional cards to seek ways of overcoming the endless skirmish. In the present, regrettable, it merely indicates that the pain will continue for the foreseeable future. However, one thing it does say is that they should not be like Sisyphus who continues out of fear. If the questioner can step out of the path that they are on, they should take it.

## Six of Chalices



*“The change in memory. The past was lavish with changes that turned out to be positive. Harmony. Love that is strengthened through oneself. (Myth of Philemon and Baucis).”*

On this card we see a very floral woman, who has numerous flowers blossoming from her head, propping up an old lady who is nurturing the plants.

This is a card that is primarily concerned with comfort and wellbeing. On one hand we can see the plants

sprouting from her crown as the result of psychological nurturing. Whether by the questioners own hand or with the help of others they have grown emotionally and spiritually into a mature individual with a beautiful personality. By developing their mind, through whatever actions they may have taken, they have become well-rounded and adept at taking on the world.

The old woman herself can represent various things. The first thing to note is that she is separate from the floral lady, but is still nourished by her. This can be indicative of a close relative or partner who adores and looks after them, allowing them room to grow and flourish into an individual that they want to be. Likewise, she can also represent the opposite: presumably, the older woman would not have stuck around if she was not herself looked after. It can thus describe a sort of emotional harmony between two people, or even between objects, where both feed into the psychological development of each other in a hugely positive way.

Another meaning that this card can indicate is that one of their plans is starting to ripen into fully fledged

material forms. Regarding the suit of Chalices, it can indicate that those emotional and spiritual feelings have been utilized in a positive way, and the results of such actions are beginning to materialize.

On the flip side, it can be a card that represents emotional or spiritual fragility. If the old woman pictured was to vanish then the floral woman would wither and die. It is a card that, although representing harmony, can also represent dependence. This need not necessarily be on an individual, but could be on anything that is a vice or defensive mechanism. For example, drug addiction can be easily seen in the imagery of this card. Thus, it can be a card that tells the questioner to be wary of crutches and to take steps to achieve some semblance of independence – this may not necessarily mean giving up something or someone, but instead making inroads at developing themselves by their own hands.

Besides all this, in a more mythological sense, the Myth of Philemon and Baucis is prominently concerned with the benevolence of hospitality. In a way then this card can be representative of an individual who, again, possesses a

beautiful personality. One that is kind, caring and above all compassionate but, ultimately, vulnerable, fragile and ill-equipped to deal with the reality of living in a harsh and unforgiving world.

That is not to say that they are bad traits by any means, more that they should be aware that others may attempt to take advantage of them, and that they should not be expecting others to reciprocate such positivity.

It is once again about finding a harmonious relationship that isn't damaging – one in which they protect each other. Either way, as long as the world lets them, the questioner should also take steps to preserve their innocence since it is a rare sight in the world and it makes them, in their own unique way, beautiful. All in all, concerning the questioner, it is a highly positive card that reflects well on them, their life, and their actions.

## Seven of Chalices



*“The distorted metamorphosis. The box of illusory metamorphoses. Fantasies and self-deception of an imaginary world, as well as an aptitude for enthusiasm. (Myth of Tantalus).”*

On this card, we see a fully grown tree with small head-like flowers dangling from its branches.

Much like the Nine of Wands this is a card about ideas. It is reasonable to assume that the sturdy oak sitting in the centre of the illustration represents the

questioner. It indicates that they are emotionally or spiritually mature and close to being “fully grown”. The heads, which can just represent seeds, are those concepts or thoughts that are now ready to fly the nest, so to speak. Whereas the Ace of Chalices represented the desire to start something or create something grand, this card represents that they have, or are close to, achieving the goal they had set themselves.

In this scenario, then, the seedlings can indicate confusion about where in their life they should go next. The Ent pictured is gazing towards one, which perhaps suggests they have an intuitive feeling about which idea to pursue, but he has nonetheless not chosen. It is indicative of indecision and weariness. The card itself holds little in the way of guidance in this situation; rather it may be a case of letting the seeds germinate slightly before committing to caring for any of them. The questioner could perhaps be encouraged to work slowly on any and all of their theoretical schemes to allow them all free room to grow. Only then may they be able to see a desirable path laid out in front of them.



If we bring into the discussion the Myth of Tantalus – who was cursed to spend eternity standing under a fruit tree, unable to grasp at the food or drink from the water - then this card holds a similar meaning to the Five of Chalices, which illustrated Sisypheus.

Unlike the Five of Chalices, however, which is more concerned with negative emotional feedback loops and obsessions over the past, this card serves as more of a warning about the follies of primitive desires. Tantalus condemned to his fate for engaging in ritual sacrifice, cannibalism and kin slaying with the goal of appeasing the Gods to escape punishment for wrongdoings. In a way, then, this card can be indicative of someone who is fleeing from, or hiding from, the consequences of their actions.

These need not necessarily be harmful in any way. They may, in fact, be positive, but by attempting to flee from the consequences they may commit actual evil in the process. It is a card, then, that suggests that now and again you have to face the music and accept your fate. In regards to the illustration it can represent the desire to look for a way of escaping – an idea that can be set in motion. It recommends that

sometimes the best cause of action is to throw away or ignore those tantalizing immature seedlings – those barely developed plots or ploys - and continue down the road that they are travelling. By doing so, they may grow spiritually and emotionally in the long term.

## Eight of Chalices



*“The metamorphosis of the mirror. Possession is just an emotional condition since nothing is actually ours. New level of awareness. (Myth of Narcissus)”*

This card illustrates a scantily clad man, Narcissus, gazing into the water which is reflecting him image. The flowers shown are of a species that share his name. In the myth, Narcissus actually drowned after falling in love with his reflection.

This is a card that can hold multiple meanings. On an entirely pragmatic level, it can indicate that the questioner is, simply, overly preoccupied with superficial desires. This may not necessarily concern vanity or grandiose thoughts about the self, although it is entirely possible, rather it may also regard obsession with material gain or wealth. In either case, the advice is clear: temper your pride and ego lest you, like Narcissus, drown. It is a card that indicates that the questioner needs to let go of those things which are not only emotionally damaging in the long run, but also those things which don't contribute to positive spiritual growth. As the old saying goes “you can't take it with you”. Beauty diminishes, wealth depreciates, careers fade and pride becomes before a fall. It serves a lesson not to get captivated by the ego who desires the present.

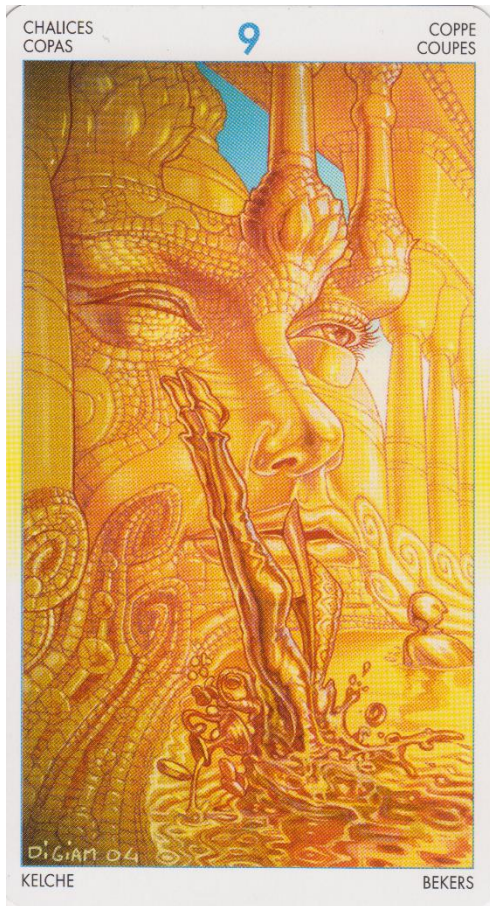
In a more positive light, this card can in a couple of ways represent beneficial self-reflection. On one hand it can indicate that questioner is going through a period of rumination or meditation that may lead to psychological growth. For example, they may have had re-evaluated where they

are in life and where they want to be going, and may have even taken steps towards redirecting themselves down such a path. Caution, however, should be given to prevent them falling into the trap of narcissism – they may feel overcome by pride that they have the ability to perform such an act which, naturally, feeds the primitive ego. Such an action is detrimental to the goals of direct or indirect meditation, for example, which is about letting go of the ego to achieve spiritual enlightenment.

On the other hand this card can be indicative of a period of self-reflection. Such thinking will not quite be as drastic as the Judgement card may suggest, but it will be a turning point in their emotional journey. They may look back and see what they have done right, or what they've done wrong, and move on from there. Again, however, it should be cautioned that they must become privy to narcissism – for example by looking back at their accomplishments and becoming exalted with arrogance or self-indulgence. Rather they should consider their actions and feelings from a more existential angle and perhaps find ways to separate themselves

spiritually from the emotionally driven material anchors of this world.

## Nine of Chalices



*“The renewal of abundance. Successful transformation that has taken place. Material and physical well-being. (Myth of King Midas)”*

In this, gorgeous gold coloured card we see a great temple, formed from the giant sentient face of King Midas. In the foreground, two golden beings play in a luscious pool.

This is perhaps above all else a card about material abundance. The glimmering expensive temple, the men

who bath in the life-blood of the earth and the expensive appearance of the card all hint at such an interpretation. More so than this, though, we should note the importance of the scene itself.

The temple bursts forth from the crown – the emotional core – of a giant head, who perhaps represents the questioner. If we assume such then it can suggest that they are both comfortable and content with their existence – that they are psychological contained within a self-made fortress. They perhaps feel cosy within their sanctuary and, although the card hints that such an environment concerns an abundance of material wealth, it can just as easily be indicative of immaterial abundance.

They may, for example, be in possession of a vast and friendly group of acquaintances – which the smaller individuals illustrated may suggest – or, alternately, they may simply be spiritually enlightened or have a keen desire to practice altruism. Whatever it is, they have a lot of it and consequentially lead a prosperous and enjoyable life. The questioner, then, may feel happy and perhaps even complacent. All in all, it represents a time of great affluence.

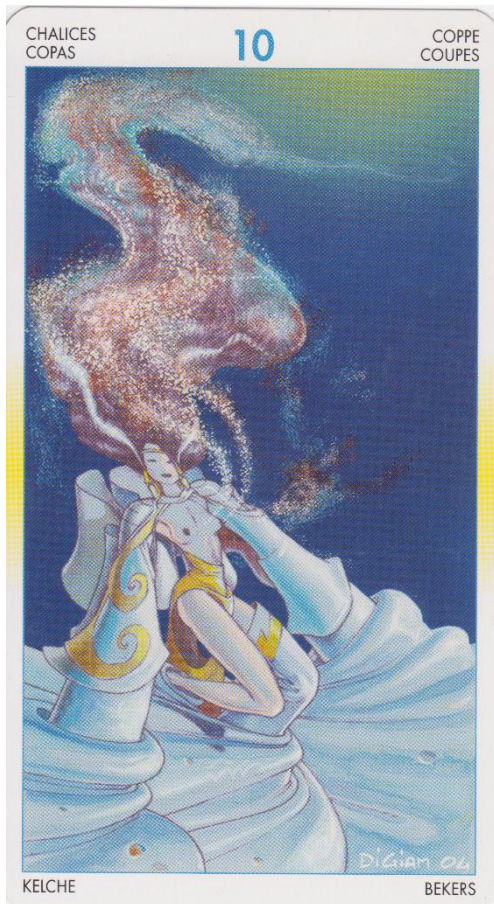


On the other hand, if we are working under the assumption that such a scenario does not fit the circumstances of the questioner then it is somewhat wise to take into account the Myth of King Midas when interpreting this card. If we do so then, this card turns into a warning about wishing for too much. In the myth, Midas is granted any wish he so pleases and out of greed he chooses that everything he should touch should turn to gold. After his initial elation, he eventually begs the Gods to be returned to normality after transmogrifying his daughter into a statue, albeit a valuable one but, of course, no substitute for emotional wealth.

This card can thus represent that the questioner should be careful about what they wish for. Perhaps that of what they seek – their targets in life – are made out of avarice and gluttony. Such goals are endemic to society: the wish for fame, for abundant wealth, for excesses of every variety. Each comes with its own drawbacks, and it may be that the questioner is blinded by their longing that they do not see that, should they achieve such wishes, it would be exactly what they did not want or need.

Therefore, it can indicate that the questioner is perhaps chasing shadows in their quest for abundance. They may have set themselves up to, in the end, fail. It advises that they should re-evaluate their path and look for more beneficial outlets besides the mere pursuit of having more of everything. At some point, they'll reach a time where they have more than anyone could ever need, and eventually, like King Midas, they will regret those things they pushed aside in their chase. In Midas' case, he eventually reformed and surrendered to charity and, likewise, the questioner is best advised to find more spiritual outlets for their talents. Should the questioner be rich in some manner themselves, then this card can suggest that they provide for those less fortunate. After all the ultimate result of King Midas' rebirth was that he became revered and exalted. Therefore, should the questioner pursue more noble causes they too will live on in the happy memories of others, rather than simply the memories of those wishing for their wealth.

## Ten of Chalices



*“Complete metamorphosis. The acquired art of changing oneself and the things and satisfaction that follows. The value of profound feelings. (Myth of Hera and the Milky Way).”*

Illustrated on this card is a robed woman floating among the cosmos. From her head flows a powerful energy which has begun to form the Milky Way. Her arms form the silky fabric of reality.

Representing maturity, this card suggests that the questioner can modify

themselves to achieve their aims. Ten, being the number of completion, indicates that they have reached the end of an emotional or spiritual journey and have accomplished great things psychologically. Whereas the Nine of Chalices was indicative of material wealth and emotional satisfaction, this card is more indicative of emotional wealth and spiritual comfort.

The ability for Hera, in this card at least, to control her psyche to create echoes well for the questioner. On the one hand, it can indicate that they have complete mastery over their emotions and have the ability to use this power to benefit the world – the universe – as a whole. On the other hand, it can suggest that they have an acute ability to deflect negative energy and channel it into a more positive force. They may perhaps be resilient and determined, able to wade through reality and from it form idealistic worlds. The questioner may be someone who is overly optimistic and likewise kind and compassionate. They may be just and fair, able to see everything objectively.

It worth noting that in the background of this card is a more sinister figure – a galactic shape, no doubt, but one that

has somewhat taken the form of a phantom. This can just represent that, again, the questioner has complete command over their actions and that no “demon” or negative influence can push them off course.

Regarding advice, this card provides little beyond saying that they should continue down the road that they are on. By doing so they will continue to make hugely important, lasting impressions on others and the world, as illustrated by Hera creating a universal goliath.

The only warning associated with this card is the spectre looming over her shoulder. This perhaps indicates that there are individuals who wish to divert the questioner off the path that they are on. The only advice, then, would be to continue to funnel these negative influences away from their psyche. By doing so, they will live a long and prosperous life.

## Knave of Chalice



*“Messenger of change that regard sentiments. (Myth of Icarus).”*

The primary message associated with this card is one of the follies of hubris. In it, we see a winged man, Icarus, following a dove into the sunlight. Unfortunately, his wings are melting, and he will thus consequentially fall back to earth.

The first thing to note is how the man pictured essentially follows a dream: that of flight, following the dove into the

heavens. This can indicate that the questioner is perhaps blindly chasing a dream out of arrogance or even just ignorance of the consequences.

Icarus is, in a way however, chained to the ground by his inability to soar through the skies. He still attempts it though, despite knowing full well that it is outside of his natural capabilities. For the questioner, this can represent that they are perhaps confidently transgressing their limitations which, although can be a positive undertaking, can ultimately cause pain and suffering for both themselves and those with whom they interact. To use an extreme example if they are perhaps planning on a missionary expedition to help build homes for those less fortunate, knowing full well they are physically incapable of such a venture, then despite the fact that they have noble intentions they are nonetheless setting themselves up for a rough fall back to Earth. The questioner wings, their overconfidence, are prone to melting should they fly too close to the sun. To put another way, should they pursue that of which they cannot possibly achieve then they are destined to be unsuccessful.

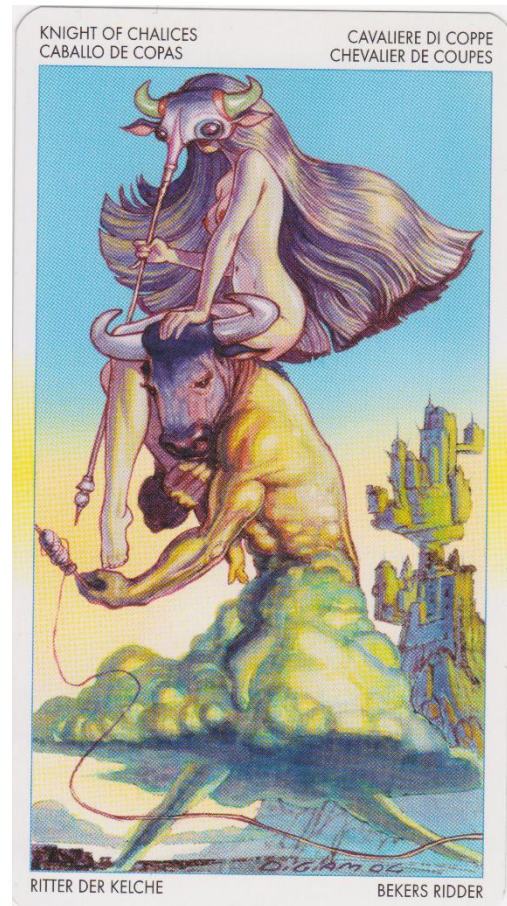
On the other hand, the man pictured on this card, despite his circumstances, appears somewhat content. He is, after all, feeling the wind in his hair and the warmth of the sun on his face. Therefore, this can could represent the exact opposite of the above, even if there will be a warning attached. It can indicate that the questioner should pursue their wild and impossible dreams so that they have their moment in the spotlight. The dove, for instance, is a herald of peace and tranquillity. Although the questioner should remember that they will ultimately fall back to earth, if it is worth it for that single moment of joy then by all means pursue it.

This being said, it is possible that should the questioner not succumb to hubris in their quest then they might, like Icarus, escape their situation (in Icarus' case, Crete). It is a card then that can suggest that if they temper their ambition, and not succumb to arrogance, then they might still achieve something wonderful. It may not be what they initially set out to accomplish, but ultimately this is a card that warns about overconfidence. It tells us that they should not aim too high and



instead should look for a goal that is just outside of their current capabilities – which gives them room to grow psychologically – but not one that exceeds it by quite some margin – where they will then fail.

## Knight of Chalices



*“Emotional and sentimental changes. Encounters. (Myth of the Minotaur).”*

This card illustrates a nude, masked woman riding on the shoulders of a Minotaur. He is unwinding a spool of string. Both are ultimately resting on top of a cloud.

With so much going on within this card it can be difficult to interpret, especially as it only alludes to the Myth of the Minotaur, rather than echoing it.

On the one hand, then, this is a card that can represent taming a wild beast – represented by the woman being carried by the legendary abomination. Such a beast may be psychological or physiological on the part of the questioner, but whatever it is they have achieved complete mastery over it and have thus made it work for them, rather than against them. For example, they may have channelled harmful excesses, such as anger, into positive forces, such as zealous passion.

Either way, the fact that the illustrated being is shown as being in the clouds suggests at a more emotional or spiritual finesse. The fact that the woman hides behind a mask hints at that maybe the questioner is adept at playing a part – they have dominance over their emotions and can, again, channel their feelings, whether good or bad, into real solid actions. In this scenario, the minotaur can represent those primal, base desires that underpin everything that humans do.

After all, it is easy to get lost in feelings of rage, or lust, or gluttony, but the string is indicative of a person that can ensure that they do not get eternally led astray. By doing so, they could, therefore,

work on developing their higher emotions, such as their ability to create art or to perform charity. To put another way, they can lead themselves out of the labyrinth of instinctual thoughts and away into the clouds, which represents more spiritual conceptions.

## Queen of Chalices



*“Intelligent and intuitive woman. Possibility of predicting changes. (Myth of Circe)”*

On this card we see Circe, a Greek sorceress of magic, gazing down in thought at a pig, which recuperates her look with one of almost worried abandonment. In the foreground, a red humanoid figure with the head of a pig holds out his hand towards Circe as if offering the key to some malevolent transformation. Multiple swine are

pictured overall, with one entering through the doorway of a complex and psychedelic temple in the background.

Overall this is a hard card to interpret, as are most of the court cards in general. By all accounts, it seems apparent that the woman shown holds significant influence over the creatures. It is likely, especially if we cross-reference the image with the myth it represents – the myth of Circe who transforms those she dislikes into swine – that she is the cause of the hominid abomination we see.

This card might, then, represent a strong ability to influence and control some external factors that are prudent to the question at hand. It is likely that in their life they can, at least in some respect, manipulate others at will. If not others, then reality itself. They may not do it maliciously, but it may still occur.

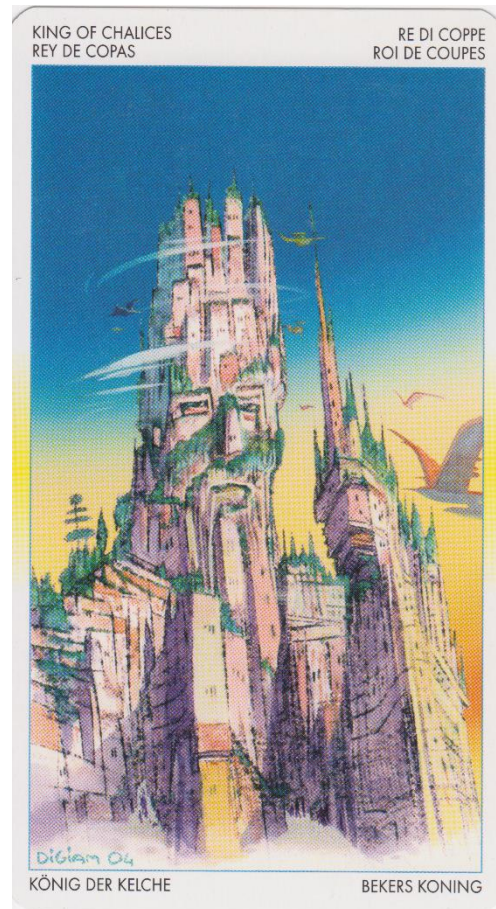
On the other hand, it could also allude to a positive influence on others, as opposed to a negative one. If the flow of magic is from the animalistic pig to the humanoid swine, and not vice versa, then it can indicate that they provide others with strength and resourcefulness to move forward – much like the woman pictured provides



the pigs with arguably beneficial human capacities.

Whether this influence is in the past, present or future depends on the scenario, but what we do know is that Circe holds great power in her hands. The real question is whether the questioner who draws this card is using such power – their mental or physical talents – for good or for evil. Are they exerting their influence in a positive or negative way? Are they helping or hindering? Assisting or manipulating? Either way they are clearly intelligent, at least in some way, and have the ability to change the path that others tread. Overall, then, it is a card that indicates power – whether that be spiritual, psychological or physical depends on the question and the position the card falls.

## King of Chalices



*“Man full of creativity with an artistic nature. Force capable of great changes, for the better or worse, regarding feelings.”*

On this card, we see a massive fortress, in the shape of an old King, towering into the sky. Around the building fly some magnificent winged creatures.

Being a king card, it represents the end of a journey. In essence, this card exemplifies the concept of the mind being a temple. The questioner perhaps



feels that they are both content and safe in their thoughts and have little to worry about when it comes to negative external influences – they are, to put another way, entirely protected psychologically, just like a castle which protects the thoughts of those resting within.

It is a card that can also represent clarity of thought, as well dominance over such. They may have the ability to modify what they feel and think on a whim and, perhaps through meditation or similar, can accomplish great things both spiritually and emotionally.

When it comes to their behaviour around others, this card is indicative of someone who is both kind and just and, like a king, is worthy of having a castle built in honour of them. Further they may possess a great ability to modify reality to achieve their desires or aid in other's pursuits of such. They are likely intelligent and creative and able to come up with solutions to any problem that they may encounter. Their mind is, in a way, completely independent of their ego and they can objectively evaluate themselves so that they may make positive changes to improve.

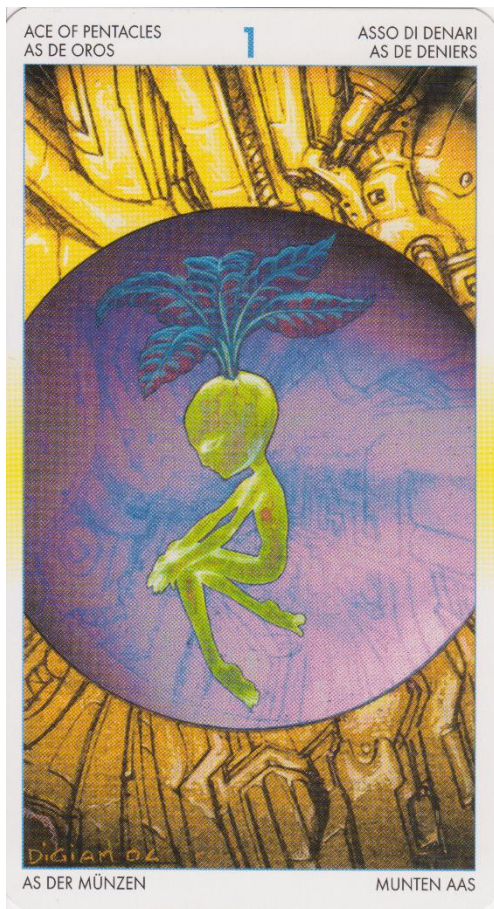
The only warning associated with this card comes from the beasts fluttering around the walls. Although they are unlikely to cause any damage, they will nonetheless cause lasting effects on the superficial elements of the construction. For this reason, the questioner may perhaps be wise to stay alert for negative outside influences that may seek to harm them physically, and who intend to disrupt them psychologically. Their mind may be a resilient and capable fortress but their body – their outer walls – are still ultimately vulnerable. The questioner, then, mustn't get too caught up in their self-assurance and should be wary of attacks.

Whatever way you look at it this is a positive card that represents emotional and spiritual completion. They must not grow complacent, however, since there is always room to grow. Always more things to experience and always more things to learn. Whatever they do they must not let their barriers be breached by spectres because they are capable of great changes should they will it. They can perhaps overcome failure by getting up and continuing rather than submitting and falling into despair. They are resilient, wise and exalted.

Above all, however, they are knowledgeable and more than capable, and they should endeavour to continue down the excellent path that they are on.

# The Pentacles

## Ace of Pentacles



*“The materialization of metamorphosis.  
Transformation imposed by will.  
Alteration of reality.”*

Like most of the Aces, this is a card about new beginnings. In it, we see a small green humanoid contained within an organic sphere. Externally it appears to be located within a very mechanical world. From the foetus’s head sprouts a blue plant.

The plant here represents the concept of ideas beginning to germinate. Unlike

what a foetus would represent on its own, however, this card is indicative of an idea that transcends the world in which it is born. For the questioner, it may suggest that they are looking to break free of their current situation and start a new kind of life in an entirely different way. For example, they may be desiring a drastic change of career, a change of location to a foreign land, or even just something as simple as a change of spiritual status – for example, they may be wishing to convert to a massively different religion. Whatever it is the idea does not come naturally in the same way that flora growing from fauna is not entirely rational.

The world that contains the bubble – the womb - is a mechanical paradise. This represents the fact that the realm in which the questioner occupies has perhaps become dull, emotionless, and impersonal, at least to them. They may feel as though they are simply going through the motions every day, merely a cog in the wheel of some greater construction.

In this scenario, the organic being further represents the seed of something new. The questioner may feel as though they can break free and live a more



exciting and full life that feels ultimately richer and more personal. They may have found something which beckons them or they may have suddenly fallen upon an idea that fills their mind with joy at the potential it creates.

Whatever the reason is, this card suggests that it would be a good time to continue to grow and develop the new idea so that they may achieve a positive ending. The world that they are entering, much like the Ace of Wands also suggests, may feel alien and bizarre but it is nonetheless something which needs to be explored.

It is a card that encourages learning and research to continue down the uncertain path. This all being said, the only warning that is attributable to this card is a cautionary one: don't compensate. The foetus illustrated is sperated compleatly from the cold outside world. Likewise, the questioner should not allow their old life to impeach on the new life that they have started to grow. They should not compromis by letting the machines interfere or meld with this unfamiliar world. After all, although there is a great spiritual and emotional desire to be set free, to start anew, it may

be accompanied by fear or anxiety concerning the unknown. This card, then, hints that they should overcome such worries and allow their schemes to grow independently of their old state of being. This way that of which they dislike about their life at current won't be brought into their new life by accident.

## Two of Pentacles



*“The two moons of change. Continuous changes can be viewed with anxiety but also as a game. Awareness of the world’s contradictions.”*

On this card, we see a sort of winged gargoyle-like creature peering down upon a nondescript building. In the sky, we have two moon, one of which is prototypical and one that is more ethereal.

The most prominent aspect of this card is, of course, the two astronomical bodies resting in the background. The first thing to note is their appearance. On the one hand, the left most moon echoes the appearance of our moon nearly perfectly. This is the moon which can represent the very physical, material and corporeal world which we are more than accustomed too. On the flip side, the smaller rightmost moon is more unearthly and heavenly which represents the more spiritual, immaterial and incorporeal world that, although we are innately aware, we are not finely tuned to understand.

Like all of the two cards, then, this is a piece about choice. The questioner, perhaps represented by the winged creature in the foreground, is maybe undecided on which path to pursue in their life. Do they proceed towards acquiring material wealth or spiritual wealth, money or enlightenment, objects or thoughts? In either case, they are perhaps keenly aware that both worlds, although sharing similarities, sit by each other closely – but they are unfortunately independent, like the moons that are pictured. The physical

world cannot interact with something non-physical, for example.

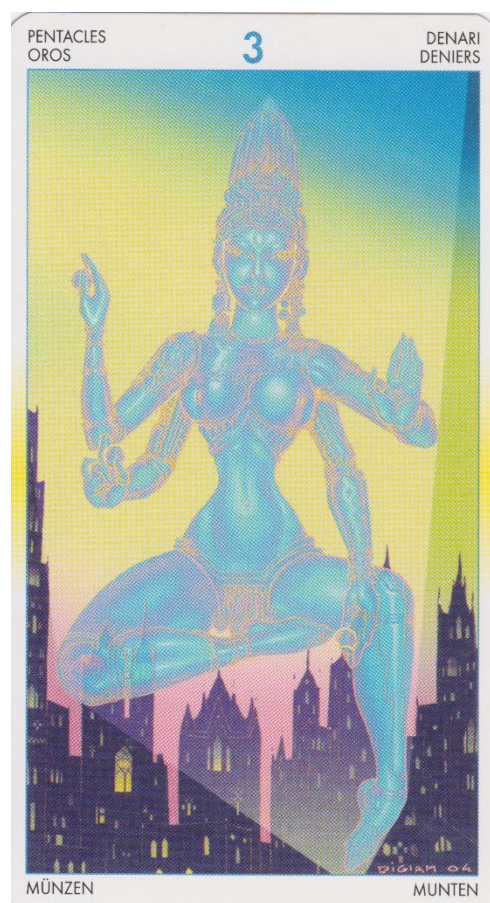
Regardless either path is, like the distance between the two celestial bodies, astronomically large. Coming just after the Ace of Pentacles this card is indicative of someone who is in the early stages of putting an idea into action. Like the gargoyle they are still likely sitting in the world that they dislike gazing up at the stars at what could be, trying to choose the best route for achieving what they would like to accomplish.

Regarding advice, this card lamentably offers little. The only takeaway is perhaps that they should start to make inroads down one path regardless of whether they've committed to it or not. Since their options thankfully sit close together, or are in some way similar, they should not be too worried about having to backtrack should they change the mind. The being pictured, for example, could follow the light of the physical moon and since the distance is so vast they could, if they so choose, switch during their travels to follow the light of the ethereal moon, or vice versa. Alternately the questioner could simply take the middle ground until they have

reached a decision on what they actually want from life.

Either way, if there is one thing that that card suggests it is that whatever journey they embark upon it will be a long and arduous one. It will no doubt have the potential to be very much like a trip through space – empty and uninteresting – but should they truly desire to change their homeland then it would be a journey that they would be privy to continue. It is better to embark sooner rather than later, however.

## Three of Pentacles



*"The metamorphosis of the new gods. The world that we perceive is just the result of the metamorphosis of the spirit of time. Increase in energy."*

This card illustrates a blue semi-translucent Shiva-like figure meditating above the lights of a sprawling metropolis.

I've always found this uncomplicated card incredibly difficult to interpret. One thing is sure however and that is that it clearly echoes the dichotomy displayed on the Two of Pentacles. In it, we have the ethereal, spiritual being hovering against the backdrop of a busy, material world. Unlike the Two of Pentacles, however, this is less a card about choice but one about harmony. The person illustrated has achieved spiritual peace in a material world, after all. It suggests that the questioner has perhaps reached a point in their lives where two opposing aspects have been brought into equilibrium.

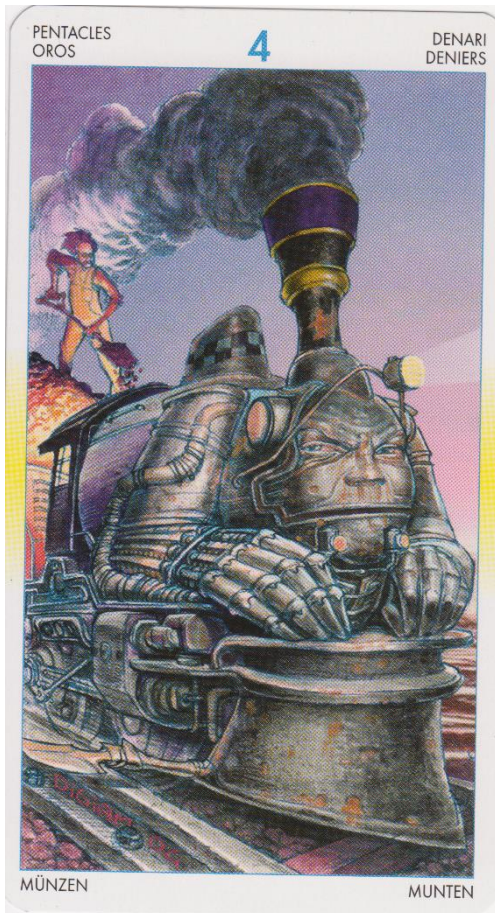
In a pragmatic sense, this may include having balanced a busy work life with a vibrant social life – something which is often difficult to do. In a more spiritual sense, it could mean that have achieved the ability to find peace in an otherwise

hectic world. Whatever it is, they have found a sense of harmony and consequentially may, as the little white booklet suggests, found that their energy levels have increased. Why? Well, when the questioner stops having to work on balancing two opposing force they may discover that they possess more time and vitality to focus on more pertinent matters.

The only warning this card may provide is that they need to ensure that they do not unsettle the equilibrium. Although they no longer have a choice, as with the previous card, they nonetheless need to make sure that the light does not stop shining, and their bustling reality does not encroach on the sense of peace they have achieved.



## Four of Pentacles



*“The road of blind change. The power that corrupts and obscures awareness, isolating it from the external environment. Insensitivity. False objectives.”*

A somewhat interesting card, it illustrates a large steam train with a rather unsettling face having coal shovelled into its engine by a driver.

The meaning behind this card is twofold, depending on whether you

interpret the questioner as being the driver or the train itself.

Firstly the train is clearly being driven by external forces. This can suggest that the questioner feels as though they are being pushed down a track without any endogenous input. It can indicate that they, like the train, have no real control or power over their path and, instead, they simply careen down the route that has already been laid out in front of them. In essence, this card is indicative of someone who is under social, emotional or cultural pressure to continue their current behaviours.

Although the train itself looks somewhat dissatisfied and resentful towards the driver, this is not necessarily indicative of someone who is unhappy, just someone who wishes for more jurisdiction over their life. For example, the questioner may desire change, however drastic, but feel unable to put plans into actions for whatever reasons. They might feel as though they have no choice but to proceed down the route in front of them and, like a train, this may indeed be true. Ultimately, however, all engines come to a stop, and when this happens, it is the questioners chance to jump off and make alterations.

It is worth noting however that this card does not show the destination of the train. It could be, then, that the questioner paths, no matter how unsatisfactory and unpleasant it feels at current, may lead to something positive. After all the external influences – the drivers – may be well intentioned in their pressure. It is, ultimately, up to the questioner to decide whether such intentions are positive or not, but what this card does tell us is that there may not be any option but to continue regardless.

Moving onto the driver, the meaning is similar to the above except that the questioner is in control. They are still heading down a one-way street, following the tracks, but they have options concerning how fast they go and when they stop. In this scenario, then, the questioner is best advised to consider their options carefully and ensure that they are heading in the direction they want. If not, then they have the power to cease traveling and hop off. They should ask themselves however why they started the journey in the first place. They are perhaps clearly going down a predetermined path, and if their intentions were initially good then,

despite how unsavoury it may seem, it might be worth continuing.

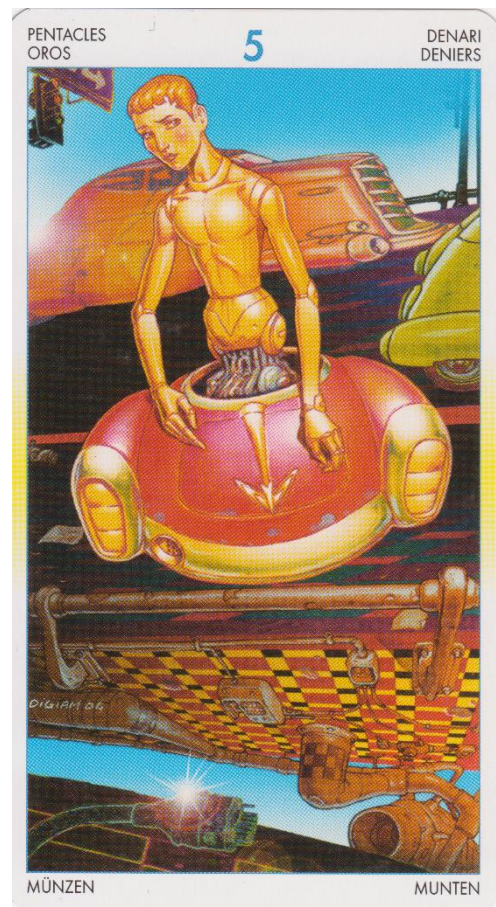
Furthermore, if the driver represents the questioner then it is a good idea to see if they are pushing others down a path that they may not wish to follow. They should ask themselves whether they are putting undue pressure on some other individual and whether their long terms aims are benevolent. After all they may be suffering at the questioner's hand.

Whatever interpretation you take away from this card it is worth noting that whatever the circumstance both the train and the driver are entirely independent of the external world. They are hurtling down the tracks without a care in the world, and only significant events can derail them. The questioner might then be rightly warned that they might be missing out on a whole world by ignoring their surroundings. They should perhaps take the time, if they can, to observe and experience the world rather than rushing headlong through it.

Whatever power compels them they may be, as the little white booklet suggests, insensitive to the

environment. The train pictured is clearly chucking out plumes of polluting smoke and, likewise, during the questioner's journey, whatever the destination, they may be harming those people or things around them, directly or indirectly. For example, a smoker may be hurting others via second-hand smoke, a workaholic by ignoring their friends and family or something just as extreme, or even just mundane. The advice then is to attempt to temper their ambition or drive and allow themselves time to gaze at the forests and countryside around them. By doing so, they may become happier and more content with their journey.

## Five of Pentacles



*“Sterile metamorphosis. The perception of not having the resources of change. A new vision of things is necessary.”*

On this rather surreal card, we see a semi-humanoid machine gazing down into an abyss. Behind him are speeding cars travelling down their own predetermined path.

Like many of the fives this is a card about reaching a state where the questioner feels apathy – in the theme of the deck we could say that the

questioner has started to undergo metamorphosis but that it is not yet quite complete. The mechanical nature of the being is indicative of someone who feels as though they are a sort of robot: going through the motions. Unlike the Ace of Pentacles where the idea was formed organically from an inorganic, boring wasteland this card indicates that now their journey has reached a point of sterility.

Like the creature illustrated, who is gazing down into the bizarre valley in contemplation, this card perhaps illustrates that the questioner ought to do some searching of their own. Like the creature who hasn't quite fully metamorphosed into a car they may feel lost and confused, unable to make sense of their existence and they maybe have slight feelings of uneasiness when it comes to the matter of how to proceed. Plans and actions have been put in motion but now they are adrift and wondering, perhaps, why they even began.

The questioner should be encouraged however; they are half way there even if they don't believe it. The ground work, the wheels and chassis, have been put in place and they are ready to build the

essential guts of the undertaking. Although it might feel as though they are going through the motions this card is indicative of someone who now has the potential to build something unique and to their own preferences. They could, if they so wished, follow in the footsteps of those who walked before them and, like the being pictured, model themselves on older creatures – the cars in the background. On the other hand, they could construct something new and exciting.

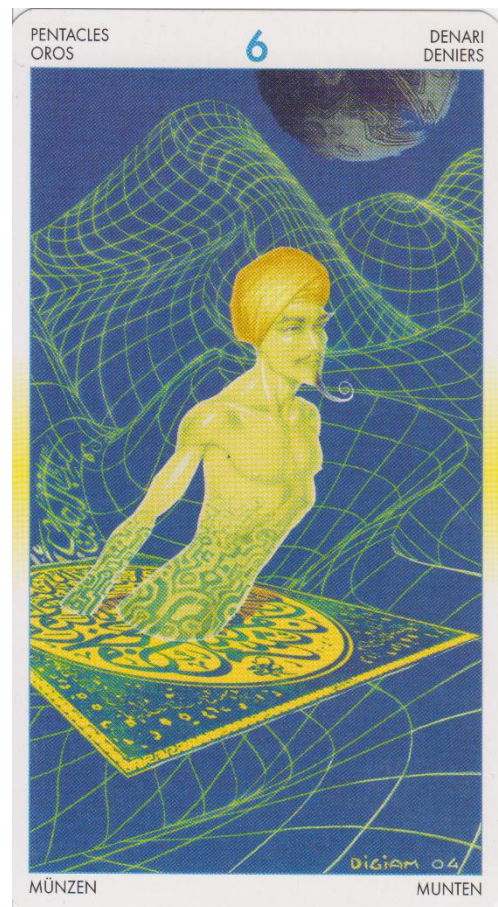
This is a card then that exemplifies the concept of being at a crossroad. Do they lead or do they follow? The questioner may be of the opinion that they have reached a point of proverbial immobility. Indeed, this may well true, in whatever case the only real option is to continue to move forward. They have the get back on the road, so to speak, lest they grow complacent in their life and have to return back to that which is represented by the Ace of Pentacles.

Alternatively, such an occurrence may in fact be a good thing if they embarked in order to escape a robotic, orderly life. In either case the little white booklet is right to say that a requisition of a new perspective may be in order. It is



unlikely to be of the same level as the Hanged Man but, nonetheless, taking time out to focus on a different project may do the questioner a world of good. When they return to their current project they may find that they had approached it from the wrong angle and, in that case, they can then get back on the road and head in an entirely different direction.

## Six of Pentacles



*“The renewal of energy. Energy circulates, transforming beings and things. Self-confidence and faith in the universe.”*

Illustrated on this card is an Arabian spirit floating on, and forming part of, a magical rug adorned with Islamic Calligraphy. The world within which he traverses is a wire-mesh desert, reminiscent of scientific representations of space-time. In the background sits the

ethereal moon that is the trademark of the suit of Pentacles.

A relatively plain card this one is somewhat difficult to interpret. We, of course, have a profoundly spiritual aspect with the religious iconography and transcendental world that contains them. It is important to note that the being pictured is on the move. This can indicate that the questioner is making inroads down spiritual paths and are starting to find themselves and understand their place in the world.

Like all metaphysical undertakings, it requires an element of faith since it concerns questions that are, by definition, beyond (meta-) science (-physics) – this is, of course, represented with the duality of the religious or spiritual figure compounded with the prototypical representation of Einstein's relativity theorems. Either way, what it does tell is that the questioner likely has confidence in their thoughts and experiences, whether of a paranormal nature or not, and has faith that what they know or believe to be true is, in fact, actuality. This is naturally opposed to scepticism born out of the confusion of attempting to meld the asomatous and material worlds, such as the mind and

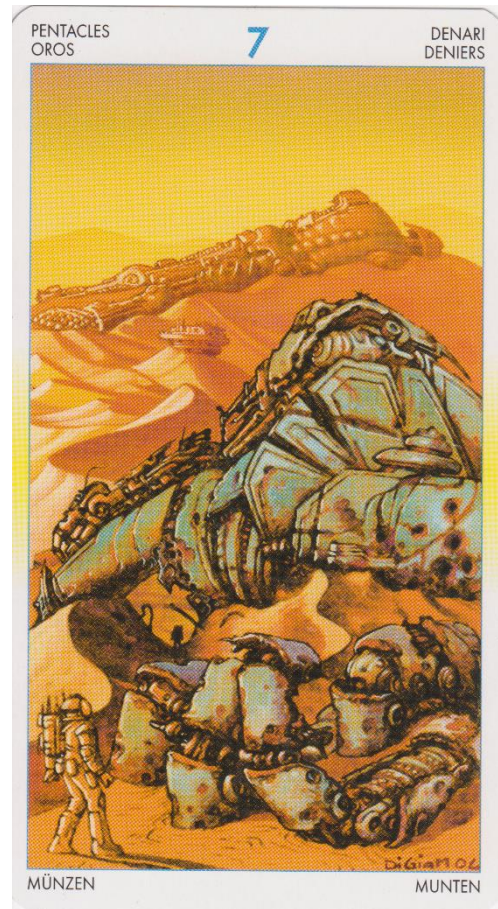
body. This self-belief consequently not only has an impact on the questioner life in the form of increased confidence and happiness with the state of the universe, but also interacts with their general emotional and psychological well-being. By this, I intend to mean that the questioner likely feels both comfortable and serene and unconcerned with the prospect of death – something which consciously or subconsciously haunts the majority of individuals.

Returning, the movement aspect in this scenario is indicative of someone who is, like the genie, free to take their own path in life. The questioner may be working on some aspect of their psychological or physiological states. This can suggest that they are taking positive steps and moving forwards. Alternately, they may instead be moving on from something, perhaps even trauma, and this card can represent that the questioner is beginning to be released from the shackles of classical psychological confinements, such as grief or sorrow.

Whereas in other cards the ethereal moon is typically representative of the spiritual world, on this card it is more indicative of spiritual grounding. It

stands out in the mystical desert since in comparison it is well defined. In this case, then, it suggests that although the questioner is on a mystical path, and is making progress, they are ultimately not succumbing to delusion or dangerous religious zealousness. Instead, they are discovering a sort of harmony between the two opposing realms of reality and unifying their thoughts and experiences with what is known to be true through science.

## Seven of Pentacles



*“The desert of abandoned metamorphoses. A lack of faith or interest thwarts metamorphosis or at least makes it incomplete.”*

In this card, we see a small astronaut-like figure gazing up the vast remains of long dead mechanical Nephilim. In the background we see a significant – especially when you consider the perspective – humanoid figure stretched out across the barren desert. Between the foreground contraptions and the

background corpse lies a small building, poking its head up out of the wasteland.

Presumably, this building is what the astronaut is searching for – a refuge in the desert, a glimmer of hope in an otherwise dreary necropolis of great forgotten beings. Although we cannot see the expression on the human's face, it is likely one of indifference or frustration.

If he has been roaming the wasteland for very long then, under the assumption that there are many more remains than are pictured littering the landscape, it is likely that he has already seen it all before. In this case, this card indicates a lack of new and exciting experiences – that their life has become a sort of chore that is devoid of any real direction or purpose. It represents boredom with current or past circumstances and potentially frustration with the path they are on.

There are two scenarios which could explain the frustration that our astronaut feels. Perhaps he is an explorer and has become disheartened with finding nothing but death on his voyage. Alternately maybe he is searching for that little building in the

background and is becoming discouraged that that of which he seeks cannot easily be found.

This card, however, is not purely indicative of boredom and resentment. It can quite easily indicate a need for patience and perseverance. Although the suit of Pentacles typically represents the more material world – a world of indulgences and financial gain – this card is also a reliable indicator of psychological hurdles on the path to a given goal or result. For the astronaut experiencing doubts and disdain the only hurdle to finding that building, which may or may not turn out to be the right goal, is overcoming that deep-rooted psychological urge to give up. The astronaut has to continue, whether he likes to or not, because the only path to success is through seeing things through to their ultimate conclusion. He, like the questioner, has presumably come so far as yet still may have a great distance left to traverse. Giving up would be as if they had never even started, despite the fact that their patience is wearing thin.

Although they may have learned many things on their journey to where they are, this card indicates that the result of



a lack of interest or perseverance is the death of such experiences. Like those long gone humanoid creatures in the card such ideas will eventually fade into nothingness and be forgotten. As a rule, then, this card alludes to, if nothing else as I have said, the need for more patience. The patience to overcome current or future frustration, the patience to overcome the loss of interest to time, and the patience to overcome that insatiable urge to give up when you do not feel even the slightest bit close to succeeding. Much like our friend pictured they may be closer than they think. It is not a card anyone may want to be drawn since it is a card of having to wait it out through tough times. Whether this is having to wait for money, or a new job, or a new relationship, or a new direction in life, it tells us that they have to keep waiting. However, what it conclusively informs us of is that day will come. It might not be today, or tomorrow, or next year, but it will come. To get there they have to travel the earth looking for it, unfortunately.

## Eight of Pentacles



*“Virtual metamorphosis. The artisan that shapes reality. Ability of observation, creativity and fantasy, as well as a lack of humility.”*

On this card, we see a mechanical being, with a face constructed of a untuned television, sitting surrounded by two dozen visible faces on screens, with presumably hundreds more not pictured.

All this card can indicate numerous adverse scenarios. Starting with the

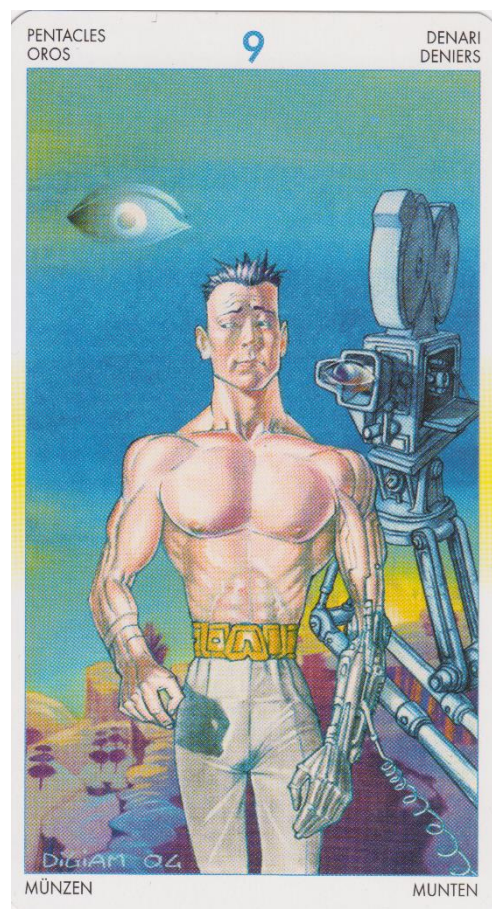
paranoid option, it can represent occurrences of conscious or subconscious brainwashing, in particular by the media. The questioner may feel like they are in a state of perpetual confusion when it comes to what they should be. The man illustrated represents the ability, or inability, to modify himself to achieve perceived societal or cultural norms. Regarding the questioner, this may indicate that they are striving to accomplish something which is either impossible or wildly unachievable. To take a quintessential example, they may be attempting to bring about a high-paying career and have been led to believe, not just by the media, that this is not only something that is entirely realistic, but also that it is the only thing that matters. In this case, then, this card can represent that the questioner feels unhappy with their current circumstances despite the fact that they are in reality in quite a beneficial situation. The advice would be to take a step back, turn off the television, and analyse their condition and look for different ways to make themselves happy. They need to ignore what they have been told will make them happy by others.

On a more positive note, this card can perhaps suggest that the questioner, although maybe not particularly happy, is quite sensitive to others. They may be, like the man illustrated, able to modify themselves to please others. Like him, the questioner may have a keen ability to help and support others in their times of need by adapting themselves to please them. In this scenario, this card can be seen as quite a positive although it, again, is indicative of someone who is also susceptible to conditioning.

This card can, as well as the above, imply that the questioner possesses a remarkably creative mind but that they may also have got lost in fantasy. Whether this manifests itself psychologically, in the form of daydreaming and reverie, or physically, such as acting out or “playing a part”, depends on the questioner and their situation. If it is the latter, then they may, as the booklet suggests, not possess any sense of humility. Being lost in fantasy they may, like the individual pictured, believe or feel as though everyone is watching them and thus may be endowed with a grandiose sense of self. In reality, however, everyone is merely screens which although they

may appear as though they are watching they are, in fact, being watched by the questioner. Therefore “who is watching who” is a pertinent question to pose. Regardless, this card thus represents that they are someone who is modified by reality, but who thinks they are, in fact, part of the club that makes the modifications.

## Nine of Pentacles



*“The transformation of success. The achievement of a material metamorphosis. Material well-being, however, is sometimes a mask for solitude.”*

This card pictures some form of movie star rigged up to an off-screen contraption via his lateral arm. An old fashioned video camera peers at him, as does a huge eye in the sky.

This is, as are most of the nines, a card that indicates success. In stark contrast

to the Eight of Pentacles, where the individual was the viewer, in this card, the protagonist is the star. It merely indicates that the questioner has perhaps achieved success and, in a way, everyone is looking up to them for guidance. They are the star of their own little world, no matter how big or small the following, and along with that comes material wealth and some degree of fame. A practical example may be having a well-paid, respectable job. Whatever they set out to accomplish all the way back with the Ace of Pentacles they have, and with it has come renown and recognition.

Despite the fact that this card is a herald of triumph it also has an element of schizoidism. Looking at the background the man pictured seems to be the only person for miles which can indicate that although the questioner has achieved material success, they may have neglected the more emotional or spiritual side to life. Despite the fact that the world is watching in awe, in reality, they may feel unhappy or depressed. If other cards indicate that this is problematic, then the best advice would be to step out of the spotlight and start fresh with a directed focus on more

timeless, immaterial endeavours. They have perhaps had their 15 minutes of fame and this card, although representing victory in one aspect, can represent a failure in another.

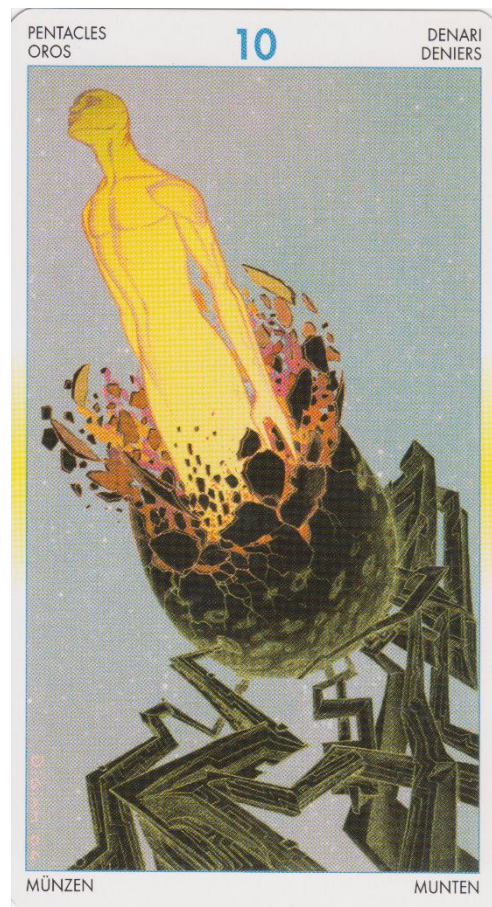
One warning to note comes from the observation that the actor is shirtless. This can indicate vulnerability. In the former the questioner may feel as though they are exposed. They may feel as though they have no security beyond the near future. Like an actor who is out of work as soon as the film is complete, they may feel pressured, anxious or stressed at their current situation – including, specifically, their financial state. They may, for example, be in a high paying but a high-pressure job in which a small, simple mistake could cost them everything, they may work in an unreliable industry or be weary of layoffs. Whatever it is the best course of action is again to take a step back and seek new avenues which offer more of what they require. Money is all well and good, but if it comes at the detriment of psychological, emotional or spiritual well-being then the question has to be asked: “is it worth it?”.

The last thing to note is that the artisan illustrated is hooked up to some



contraption. This echoes the Eight of Pentacles since it may represent that, despite appearances, they are just as much at the whims of society, of others, as anyone else. Although they may be successful, the warning would perhaps be that they are still under the external influence of others and maybe haven't even crafted the path that they are on. In either case, this is a card simply about success but at what cost.

## Ten of Pentacles



*“Posthumous metamorphosis. Transformation that surpasses the human. Acquired power will be dispersed if it is just accumulated without using it for higher purposes.”*

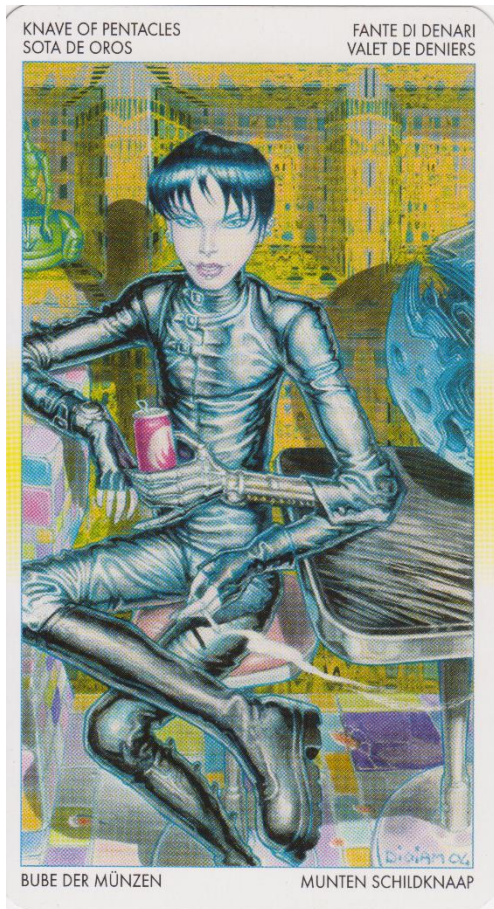
Whereas the Nine of Pentacles was about achieving success this card, which shows a fire elemental bursting from an earthen egg, is about the death of success and the metamorphosis of it into something else. In reference to what I said about the previous card, this

drawing is more indicative of someone who has evaluated their potentially unsatisfying but fortunate position and decided to transmute what they have into something that is perhaps more gratifying. For example, the questioner may have used their material wealth to found their own business, go on missionary work, or even just simply add extra security to their lives - for example by decreasing their expenses and increasing their savings.

Ultimately this is a card about change after the fact. Whatever the questioner may have achieved will be born again and changed into something new and positive. It echoes, in a way, the Ace of Pentacles. Unlike that card which indicated the very start of a journey this card is more indicative of an odyssey that has finished and one where a new idea or scheme is perhaps in order. Furthermore, it indicates that instead of starting from the beginning the questioner has all the resources and knowledge they need, whether concerning the material or immaterial worlds, and can put their plan into motion immediately. The idea that they perhaps have at the back of their mind, then, can burst free and become real

should they truly desire it. Fundamentally this is a card that indicates a drastic positive change and in a way encourages it fervently.

## Knave of Pentacles



*“Sign of material change. Matter is crystallized vibration of the psyche.”*

On this card, we see a leather-clad gentleman sitting at a table, upon which rests this deck’s symbol of Pentacles. In one of the individuals’ many hands rests a lit cigarette and in another an unspecified beverage.

In general, this card indicates that there is a willingness to change and modify the psyche. Drugs – like the nicotine pictured - are typically used by humans

to invoke psychological or physiological change. This can thus suggest that the questioner has a strong desire to revolutionize their situation, whether good or bad, by modifying their behaviour or thoughts – that is to say, their mental states, just a nicotine would tweak.

On the one hand, this can be accomplished by taking positive, additive, steps, such as starting an exercise regime or introducing alternative therapies to treat medical ailments. On the other hand, it can be taken to mean that they may need to pursue negative, subtractive, paths to move in the direction of their choosing. In the latter the man illustrated can suggest that the questioner is perhaps willing to endure difficult times shortly to achieve a desirable outcome in the far future. In a pragmatic sense, and one that is strongly related to the illustration, it can be as simple as beating an addiction, which requires surviving withdrawal, or even just removing animal products or sugar from their diet, which would involve initially disrupting homeostasis.

Either way, it is worth asking the questioner, or examining the other

cards, as to whether there is, indeed, something that they would like to remove or subtract from their life. If there is then this card represents that the desired outcome will indeed occur.

On such a note, it is worth mentioning that the individual illustrated has two left hands. The natural organic hand is holding the cigarette which represents the primal subconscious that seeks pleasure over all else – food, sex, drugs, anything which your body believes, or is lead to believe in the case of narcotics, is essential for its survival. The newer inorganic mechanical hand which is bursting free from his arm, holding a presumably less addictive drink, represents the conscious mind triumphing over the subconscious. It signals that the questioner will conquer their irrational, primitive urges on account of their higher functions of reason and rationality. They will, in summary, overthrow their subconscious and, in a way, demonstrates the separation between conscious and non-conscious beings – ones who can overcome natural longing for dopamine.

It is worth noting that this card need not necessarily represent anything as drastic as overcoming an addiction, in

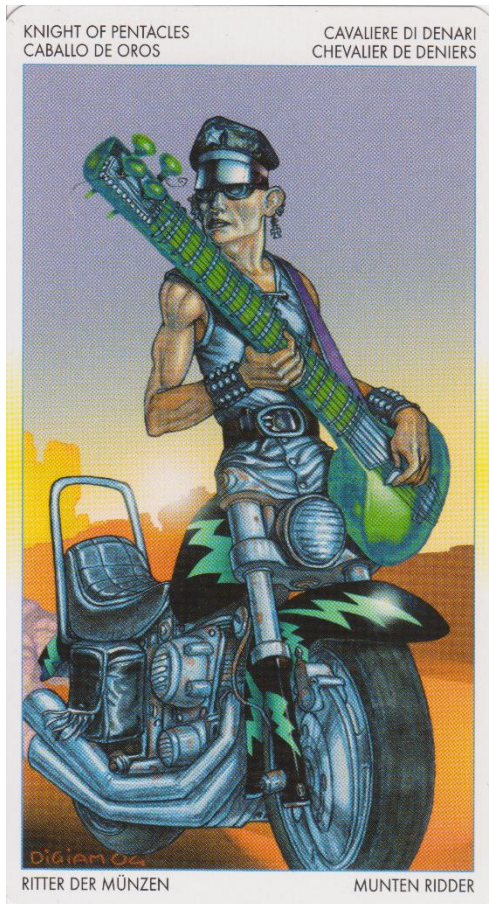
can simply suggest that the questioner will overcome what amounts to a conditioned habit. They may break the cycle of overspending, or resolve to change a negative aspect of their personality, or even just merely be more charitable in general. Whatever it is, this card says it can be achieved with ease, at least when looking back in retrospect.

Furthermore, we should take a look at the potential reasoning behind the ethereal moon appearing on the table shown in this card. It could mean that the result of these changes is, as the little white booklet would suggest, material change. More money can, of course, be seen as fortunate and, likewise, the questioner may find themselves in a position of prosperity when the metamorphosis is complete. This need not necessarily be financial prosperity, but can include emotional, spiritual or psychological wellbeing too.

This could of course be said about anything that I've mentioned thus far with this card. The ultimate takeaway from all this, however, is that the questioner will, should they modify their psyche, find themselves in more promising and desirable circumstance, in whatever form that may take.



## Knight of Pentacles



*“Energy that makes up matter and forms complete structures. Patience is necessary for achieving objectives.”*

On this card, we see a modern centaur – a half man half motorcycle creature who is strumming away on a guitar as he rides away from the sun.

In essence, this is a card that indicates despondence. The man pictured, just as with the train in the Four of Pentacles, ultimately has no control over his destination. He requires the direction of

a rider to move him anywhere at any speed. Unlike the aforementioned card, however, this one indicates that at least the questioner has some control over the nature of the trip itself.

Presumably, while moving the creature illustrated would be constructing and playing musical numbers and so, thus, can at least enjoy the ride that that’re on. This can indicate that the questioner, although maybe having no control over their path, does at least have some conscious control over the more creative and higher-functioning side of the task at hand. For example, if they feel trapped in a dissatisfactory job then this card could suggest that they do in fact have some room to maneuverer, although they may not see it. The destination would ultimately be identical, but the journey itself would be dissimilar. This need not apply just to careers but anything in general. They may feel as though they need a more vibrant social life and although they may feel despondent and as though they are bound by their current friendships, they, in reality, have complete choice over with whom to engage.

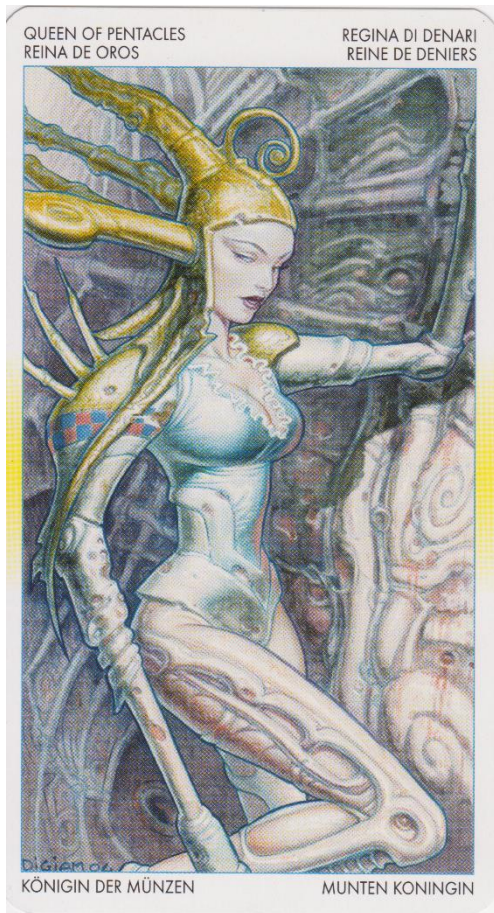
In either case, an alternative meaning of this card is that there is a melding of two

dichotomies. Like the Knave of Pentacles of which represented a struggle between the conscious and subconscious, this card is more indicative of harmony between the two. Instead of working against each other the man pictured can imply that the questioner has, or feels a need to, balance the more mechanical, primal aspects of their lives with more organic, psychological issues. In this scenario, then, the instrument would represent the higher functions of creativity and rationality with the lower functions that govern the lives of all humans being represented by the machine.

In light of this, we could take this card to mean that the questioner should bring about equilibrium in aspects of their lives which are at war with each other. It tells us that should they wish to have any control over their destination then the body, the machine, needs to cooperate with the mind, the seat of sensibility. If they fail to do so then only conflict can arise and, as we all know, self-contained internal strife is destructive and counter-intuitive. The questioner should, therefore, be encouraged to seek out a way to unify their thoughts and feelings in whichever

way they can, in whatever way that concerns them. If it is weighing up the need for money and the need for happiness, for instance, then it could be a case of switching jobs to something which covers expenses while also enabling emotional growth. In any case, this card implies that unanimity is crucial.

## Queen of Pentacles



*“Sensitive and astute, sometimes vain woman. The desire to participate in creating and modifying reality.”*

One of my favourite cards of the Minor Arcana this is a somewhat hard picture to describe in any other way than saying that it illustrates a mechanical woman walking.

The first thing to note with this card is the clothing the lady is wearing. She wears little on her body and yet wears a bronze helmet and shoulder pads. This

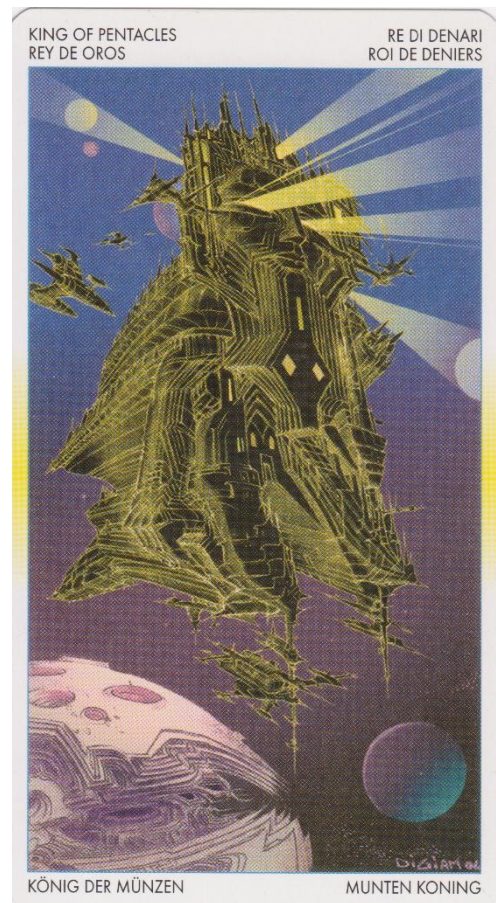
can indicate psychological sensitivity. She is willing to expose herself to criticism and yet is perhaps afraid of that very thing. Regarding the questioner, this can suggest that they have a willingness to be open and “out there” but don’t possess the confidence or self-assurance required to face the potential ramifications. In this case, the armour, which almost exclusively covers her crown, represents emotional or spiritual barriers that are perhaps holding them back from achieving wondrous things. In this scenario, then, the advice would be to take decisive steps to erode those barricades and allow themselves to be defenceless. Only then can you truly grow as a human, after all even the harshest of criticism carries with it guidance for the future.

In addition to this, we can see that the woman’s arms are handleless – without fingers or thumbs. This is a common theme among the individuals illustrated in the Pentacles suit as a whole, but it is especially pertinent to the understanding of this card in general. It implies that the woman pictured has a complete inability to interact meaningfully with reality. When we add this to the fact that she has mental



barriers erected it can be taken to mean that such defences potentially hinder the questioner. The best course of action, then, would be to – as previously mentioned – dismantle those structures and consequentially move forward.

## King of Pentacles



*“Man that is methodical and reliable but slow to action. Situations that are realized.”*

On this card, we see a grand space-temple floating among the cosmos. Searchlights glare out from the crown, and small recon ships are scattered around. In the background we see a giant mechanical planet close by with a Uranus-like world sitting in the distance.

This is a card that represents discretion and carefulness. The ship, after all, is



likely slumberous and slow to move. It is apparently searching for something, and that something is potentially one of the planets that sit nearby.

On the one hand, we have the very metallic world which is possibly indicative of materialism and order, while the other realm possesses a more ethereal and transcendental quality – perhaps representing the more spiritual existential world. The natural formation is closest by which may indicate that the questioner psychologically feels nearer to the rational, physical world than the irrational, immaterial world.

Furthermore, the ships decor matches the former planet which alludes to it being their home world – in that the questioner feels more a part of the rational world and maybe lacks any particularly distinct connection to the spiritual realms. The vessel is also likely highly self-sufficient since it must, by definition, drift through space millions of miles away from aid. This could quite easily indicate that the questioner is, of course, self-sufficient.

The antennas on the castle, the searchlights, and the search vessels all point to the questioner being logical and

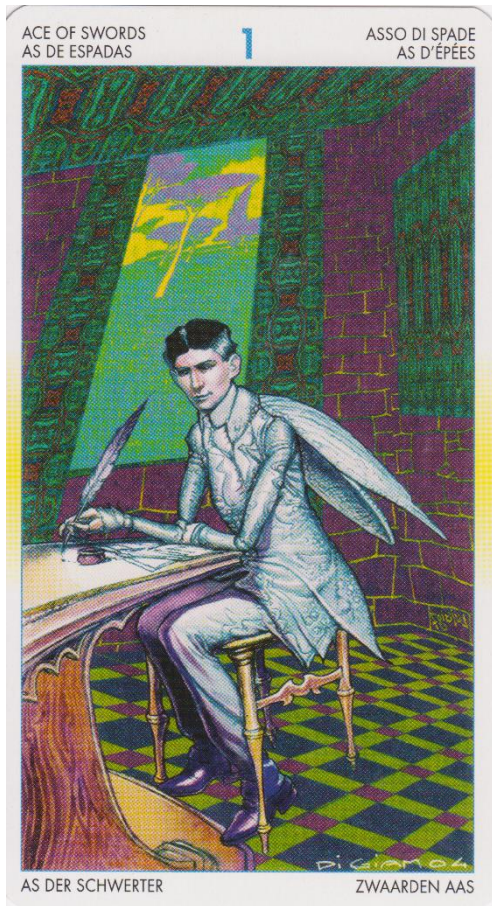
thorough in their decisions. They may choose the correct path the vast majority of the time, but they may be slow to act and slow to get moving. As advice, this card may tell us that it may be worth trusting their subconscious, spirit guided intuition more often and taking a few more risks to achieve their ambitions potentially in shorter period.

Of course, if they are methodical by nature then this is unlikely to change, and if they possess an element of pessimism, they may be unwilling to take such a risk. It is not a negative state of mind by any means – it is a rather positive one in that they would reliably choose the best option – but instead it is a state of mind they may have to change to connect more to the spiritual world. Trust in your subconscious' guidance, in essence, and allow room to innovate and experiment – even if it leads to failure more often.



# The Swords

## Ace of Swords



*“The tool of metamorphosis. Metamorphosis of the writer: the manner in which the writer thinks of him or herself consequently modified the world. The pure transformational power of thought. (The Metamorphosis – F. Kafka).”*

This card shows a winged scribe sitting down at a table with a quill in hand and an inkwell nearby. He is presumably beginning his masterpiece and is ready to imprint his first word on the page.

Like the majority of the Aces, this is a card about fresh starts and new ideas. Unlike others, however, which hint at the concept this one exemplifies it. The writer has not just had an idea, but he has started to put it into action. Much like an author, however, the questioner may not know the ins and outs of their scheme just yet. Despite this, they have resolved to turn thoughts into actions and will, in a way, wing it until it is complete.

This, then, is a card about courage. It is about the questioner having the confidence to go with the flow and explore their subconscious mind. Just like how an author puts thoughts into concrete sentences, initially unplanned, the questioner may be of a happy-go-lucky type and, of course, will likely have a knack for creativity and intuitive thinking.

On the subject of creativity, this card can also represent an ability to think on their feet. The questioner should perhaps be encouraged not to think things through to their conclusion, as counterproductive as that may seem. By doing so, they may discover that whatever plans they have, or whatever actions they wish to perform, by just



surrendering to fate they may achieve something more wondrous than they could ever have imagined. By overthinking they may fall into a rut, unable to start even the first sentence of their story – a new chapter in their life. Indeed, this card pushes the questioner to take a leap into the darkness, to take that first step into the unknown, and make something which will potentially have a large amount of impact on the world as a whole.

Alternatively, this card can be one of caution. Once again, as if a writer, the questioner despite being at the very beginning of their journey, perhaps should be warned that it will not be an easy novel to weave. Like any long piece of writing will take time, commitment, perseverance and, above all, tenacity to see it through to completion. They should be asked, then, whether they are prepared for the diligent hard work needed to fabricate their story, to achieve their desires. In either case, the suit, Swords, represents the need for imminent action. It, therefore, implies that the questioner should jump into whatever project they have been planning and simply go with their

subconscious thoughts and ride their intuition to success.

## Two of Swords



*“The metamorphosis of another. The two aspects of being in precarious equilibrium. Harmony, in order to last, must continuously change. (The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde – R.L. Stevenson).”*

This card illustrates a little gentleman locking hands with a larger and more imposing figure which is descending from a mirror, which is itself resting on the spine of a chair.

Unlike most of the Twos, this card is less about there being a dichotomy, although it certainly hints at one, but rather that there exists a delicately balanced equilibrium between two, or more, opposing forces.

In the first instance, this card is indicative of someone who is struggling with internal, self-generated strife. The mirror naturally reflects back the gaze of he who looks within, and in this card’s case, and in the case of Dr. Jekyll, such a reflection is perhaps contemptuous or dissatisfactory. It can imply that the questioner is struggling with some problem or thoughts that, although not preventing them from performing their duties, may be inhibiting them. Both sides of the clash illustrated would be better without the other there to halt them and, likewise, the questioner may feel as though their doppelgänger is obstructing their path.

In reference to the Ace of Swords, this card can indicate that although their journey is underway, and that they’ve put thoughts into action, some compelling force is holding them back. It may be endogenous, such as doubt or fear, or it may be exogenous, such as social or cultural pressure.

In either case, the advice is the same: they need to observe their alter-ego, that person or thing that is restricting them, and honestly contemplate why such a barrier has become to be. If there is no rational reason then it is perhaps the case that they need simply power on through and overthrow their subconscious, egotistical Lord.

This is, perhaps obviously, in stark contrast to the message associated with the Ace of this suit; one of leaping into the darkness and being guided by the intuition. Instead, this one suggests that they have now reached a sort of writer's block and that they now no longer know how to proceed. The limitations of the questioners subconscious have perhaps come out into the open and they now probably require guidance from a conscious mind. A mind that is maybe feeling the pressure and has a strong desire to abandon all hope. If this is the case, then this card can advise that they push on and persevere, destabilize the equilibrium before the negative energy that surrounds them, their Mr. Hyde, engulfs all the good things they have achieved thus far.

This card can, therefore, be seen as one of encouragement, that although the

questioner is perhaps locked in a battle, with themselves or others, the best course of action is to evaluate their position and move forward. Taking a step back only lets the demon out of the closet.

## Three of Swords



*“The metamorphosis of pain. Separation and renunciation lead to purification and rebirth. The moral conscience of knowing how and wanting to view life as it is, for better and worse. (Dracula – B. Stoker).”*

This card illustrates a rather dapper gentlemanly figure standing in a clearing in a dense forest. From the sky descends a firenado which strikes him on his left shoulder.

The first thing worth mentioning with this card is the fact that the individual is standing within a woodland. This can infer that the questioner feels lost or confused and are attempting to locate a path out of the trees. Unlike with the Five of Wands, however, this card is less about needing a change in perspective and more about requiring diligence. To find his way out the man illustrated, Dracula, needs to approach the dilemma carefully and, second of all, act with impetus – as the suit of Swords would suggest. If he, or the questioner, doesn’t execute a plan then the metaphorical sun will rise and burn them to ashes. This, of course, is more metaphorical than anything else, and can, from the questioner perspective, be taken to mean something along the lines of that without confidence or determination they will suffer psychologically.

Regarding more practical examples, if they are struggling with a project then by not acting resolutely they may miss their deadline or create a defective product – either of which would result in emotional damage, such as the decrease in morale that comes with failure, or the consequences of their



inaction. In this scenario, then, they will be touched symbolically.

On the other hand, this card can also represent courage in the face of dangerous circumstances. The individual illustrated has a sort of care-free look on his face, despite his precarious situation. This can thus indicate that the questioner is perhaps fearless. To refer to the previous example, it can imply that the questioner, although maybe not acting decisively, is nonetheless currently optimistic about their future.

In essence, then, this is a card that indicates a sense of carefree optimism and can therefore serve as a warning to not grow complacent. They may indeed be in a perilous situation and, if they are not careful, there is the potential to be burned. Determined action is necessary if they are to proceed further down the path that they are on and ultimately if they act in such a way they will learn and grow psychologically from it.

## Four of Swords



*"The retreat of metamorphosis. Voluntary and temporary withdrawal from the tempestuous world of change. Wounds are healed. (A Midsummer Night's Dream – W. Shakespeare).*

A fairly busy looking card we see an angel comforting a horse-headed human who is resting in a bountiful forest. Around his neck lies a floral wreath, and in the background, more spiritual creatures dance.

Typically, the Fives are associated with success, but the Four of Swords is closer to such a meaning than the Five of Swords. Unlike the others, however, this is a card about atypical, corollary triumph.

The individual pictured, if we assume the questioner to be the creature resting, has the head of a horse or mule. Instead of alluding to real ugliness it is more indicative of a lack of confidence – someone who doubts their abilities and thus feels sordid in some manner. For example, they may not have succeeded at what they set out to accomplish and thus feel as though they are a failure. The wreath in this indicates that, no, they were not entirely a washout. They may have learned much on their journey thus far and can use that knowledge and experience moving forward, after all with every disappointment comes some form of achievement. For instance, if we refer to the Ace of Swords, which illustrated a writer sitting down to craft a masterpiece, the questioner may have set out to produce a magnificent work of art but only to come up short. In this case, it is the journey itself which is

important, and the next time they may find more typical success.

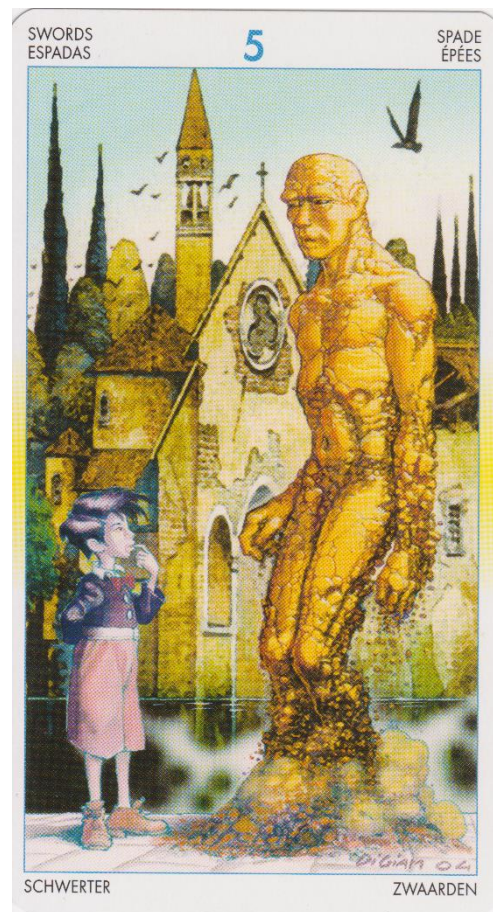
There is a warning associated with this card: don't grow comfortable in the realm of self-pity. Although it is easy, even lazy, to fall back on the soothing angels that reassure and accompany them, the questioner should be encouraged not to spend too much time in such a world. It is all too easy to give up, but the suit of Swords advocates action and likewise they should return to their feet and continue on their way. They may not have achieved a prototypical success but what they've learned thus far can be utilized in the future, moving forward.

Moving on, in a more pragmatic sense this card can represent that the questioner is, like the angel, someone who is caring and supportive. If the questioner appears to present as them, then they should be praised and informed that they are on a noble path. The warning, in this case, would concern the need to allow others to suffer so that they may learn – to not let others fall back on them and thus grow slothful. Sometimes the best way to help someone is to withdraw aid and force them to return to his or her feet. In a

way, then, in this scenario, it is a card that can represent the old saying that sometimes you have to be “cruel to be kind”.

Of course, it is worth noting that this card does not inform us that such action is necessarily required. Instead, it tells us that as warm and comforting as they are to those who suffer they should not be a permanent crutch – such an occurrence would lead to spiritual vampirism which would drain the questioner of any form of psychological wellbeing. In other words, be friendly and compassionate but don’t let others exsanguinate them emotionally because they have, in their eyes, failed. Instead, assist them until they are ready to use what they’ve learned to move forward and don’t prevent them from doing anything other.

## Five of Swords



*“The crisis after change. Changes that lead to defeat. This, however, should be considered a necessary phase. Changing of one’s scale of values. (Legend of the Golem).”*

This card illustrates a small boy is gazing up at a giant rock golem. The meaning behind this card largely depends on whether the questioner is represented by the boy or the golem.

On the one hand, if it is the former then it is a card the indicates wonder and a

change of perspective. The boy may perhaps be in a perilous position, with the grand beast lumbering towards him, and thus, it can indicate that the questioner will face some form of crisis if they have not already. It is indicative of someone who can see the storm clouds gathering and, as the suit represents, can therefore encourage decisive action preceding the downpour. For example, if they are expecting an unwieldy bill on the horizon then by taking reasonable steps to save money beforehand will minimize the impact. It can be a card, then, that represents that trouble is on the way.

On the other hand if they are represented by the golem then it is indicative of someone who is pursuing a direct, unimaginative path. Golems, of course, act literally and perform their duties exactly as their creator intended or said. This, however, can lead to a state where there is a lack of innovation. In the stories the golem was vanquished for such a deficit.

This all being said this card can, therefore, serve mostly as a warning. In the first instance it hints at the need to avoid any oncoming traffic, so to speak. If there is trouble in some realm, and it

is approaching fast, take preventative steps to either prevent or diminish its ultimate impact. On the other hand, if pain or problems have already set up shop then the best course of action is to be creative, take visionary or untrodden paths else, like the golem, you may find yourself under fire and thus in an unfortunate position moving forward.

As a final note, there is a hint in the card that the golem is already returning to the earth from whence he came. Thus, if difficulties are neither arriving or here and, instead, have already passed, then this card indicates that the questioner should consider their potential failure as another step in their long journey. Perhaps like a golem they were too literal and rule-bound in which case a slight change of perspective or way of thinking may prevent such predicaments reoccurring. In essence then, this is a card that conclusively represents hardships, but one that they will maybe survive and grow from should they act originally – after all no path is set in stone, no matter how much it may seem that way.



## Six of Swords



*“The metamorphosis of the pilgrim. Unusual journeys, even mental. A search in the broadest sense imaginable. (Inferno – Dante).”*

This card shows a man being navigated through the river of Styx. In the water rests ungodly beings.

This is, for the most part, a card about moving forward. Whether the questioner is the boat or the passenger makes little difference to the outcome.

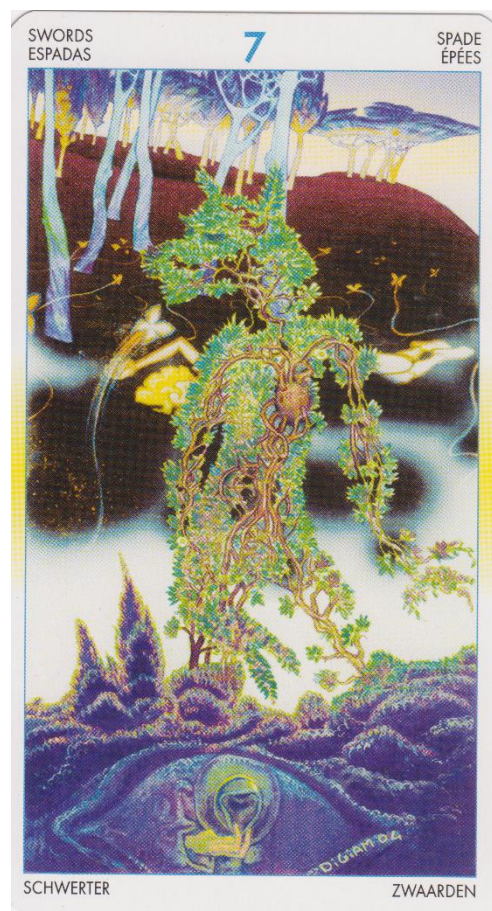
Whereas the Four and Five of Swords were representative of troubles, this card is more indicative of navigation. The questioner, then, may be faced with difficulties and woe surrounding them, but they are, presumably, navigating their way through them successfully.

This is also a card that is about intermittent success. The journey ultimately leads to the inferno, so the result is in itself massively problematic. They are not out of the water just yet, so to speak. Instead, they are taking problems as they come and successfully dealing with them as they arise. For instances if the questioner is struggling with a work project that requires many distinct problems to be solved then this can indicate that they are resolving them one by one but the result – the project as a whole, the overall Inferno – has yet to be completed. Regarding relationships, this card could be indicative of someone who has fortunately passed rough patches in the past or present, but ultimately there is a bigger problem underlying it all.

So what does this card suggest? Well like the gondola pictures they have no option but to continue. They cannot speed up their voyage and get to the root

of the issues at hand immediately. Rather than this card indicates that the questioner needs to continue to walk down the path that they are on and forget about the bigger picture. If worry consumes them about the result, then they should be reassured that they can face that at another time, but for now they should focus on the present and deal with the issues at hand now. The Goliath obstacle incoming can be addressed at a later stage.

## Seven of Swords



*“The stratagems of transformation. The mind searches for solutions through imagination. Success is only partial. Shrewdness and stratagems can resolve situations, but a profound search for other energies might be necessary. (Legend of the Werewolf).”*

Perhaps one of the most surreal cards in the deck, the Seven of Swords illustrates an ethereal, transcendental woodland creature.

So what to say about this card? Well on the journey that is the Suit of Swords this card is indicative of someone who is in the later stages of their schemes. The questioner may have reached a point where they are seemingly stuck or immobile. This card, then, represents the need for a metamorphosis of the mind and perhaps even the body.

As a werewolf, then, they should seek ways to mutate psychologically to overcome any obstacle they may be facing. This can be as radical as taking an entirely different path, for example by choosing homeopathy over traditional medicine, or as simple as taking a new view of the problem, for instance by looking for psychogenic causes to their problems as opposed to physiological reasons. – For example back pain exacerbated by stress could be resolved by modifying their environment instead of changing their body.

In either case, this card suggests that the mind – the surreal seal of the subconscious – is in charge and they should use their higher functions to come up with solutions. In a way, then, it is a card that suggests precisely what the booklet posits.

## Eight of Swords



*“The dilemmas of metamorphosis. Indecision, immobility, mental confusion of those who don’t know what to do. Time goes by, weighing on the conscience. (Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland – L. Carroll).”*

This card illustrates a young maiden, Alice, hopping through a surreal landscape holding a pink flamingo. In the background, the White Rabbit perches on some stilts while flowers morph into melting clocks.



This is, as it may be obvious, a card that is mostly a card about confusion. Regarding the suit of Swords and the journey they represent, it can firstly indicate that the questioner is feeling some bewilderment or internal turmoil over which path to follow, which actions to take.

The flamingo which Alice is grasping is indicative of someone who perhaps has latched onto a bizarre or improbable idea and who is, in a way, running with it to see where it takes them. Whether this is a positive step is not indicated by this card, but it suggests that whatever theory or scheme they have dreamt up it is hard to ignore. For example, an accountant of thirty years might have suddenly thought of leaving all behind to pursue a career teaching yoga. By any rationale this would seem frankly crazy, after all they would be leaving all that money and prestige behind. However, in their eyes, it makes perfect sense, in much the same way that the hallucinations or delusions dreamt up when going down the rabbit hole do. This is not to necessary mean that it is a bad idea, just that to an outside observer who knows little of their first person perspective it seems odd, to say the least.

Whatever it is, whatever the action is that they are delaying out of indecision, like the little white booklet suggests it is more the probably that it weighs heavily on their conscience. They may feel as though they are running out of time to make a change or even the opposite: they have too much time. It is all too easy to put difficult life altering decisions off until the following day, which tumbles into the following week, then the following month. This card, then, can indicate that despite how ludicrous or psychotic their plan seems, perhaps even to them, it is worth the time and effort to evaluate rationally. After all, if their subconscious it always pushing it to the forefront of their mind, then it must hold some weight.

Contrary to this, they may feel as though they are already living a crazy life and may be consistently struggling which internal conflict when it comes to making simple decisions. The key takeaway factor for this card in this scenario, therefore, is that they perhaps need to climb out of the rabbit hole, instead of into it, and add stability and uniformity to their life.

In either case, whatever path they eventually decide to take, and whatever



decision they finally commit to, they will, like Alice, grow as an individual. They may discover that that it was an incorrect decision, and that is okay, you live and learn. However, by standing still nothing is lost but, also, nothing is gained. This is a card, then, that encourages action – like many of the Sword cards. The questioner should not, however, discard all ideas, no matter how truly crazy they seem.

## Nine of Swords



*“Obscure change. The force of negative thoughts. The conscience has fallen into the dark kingdom of fears and primitive instincts. The first step is to understand that it is the perception of things itself that is negative, and not the things themselves. (The Picture of Dorian Gray – O. Wilde).”*

In this card, a painting of a suited gentleman is flowing into a sinister figure that gawks menacingly at the questioner.

This is a card that is most concerned with the inner thoughts becoming corrupted and, in a way, dangerous. The ominous face is representative of instinctual, primal desires and the lust for wealth, power, or whatever it is.

If we remember back to the Ace of Swords, where a very similar individual was sitting down to begin his masterpiece, then this is a card that indicates that the questioner's initial intentions have, somewhere along the way, become perverted and twisted. This is a card then that suggests that they wrestle back their primordial subconscious desires and lead themselves back onto a more noble path.

To use an example, the questioner may have set out on their journey to craft a magnificent painting of their creation, but out of greed eventually fell into the trap of reproducing others work to achieve financial gain. In such a case the goal would be to return to the uniqueness that makes them-them and to produce something by their hand and design.

On the other hand, this card can be rather pragmatic and simply indicate that the questioner has succumbed to

evil. Their actions or behaviour may be hurting others or damaging themselves in the long run. The demon in their soul may have been let loose. It serves in this case as a warning. A sort of spiritual note that their actions need to change.

For instance, the questioner may have succumbed to frequent bouts of jealousy, anger, greed, lust, envy or just plain bitterness. In any of those cases their actions are most probably out of fear – a fear that they will themselves be hurt. They are defensive mechanisms constructed to protect what they have, and to add extra security or stability to their lives. If this seems to be the case with the questioner, then the advice is simple: reign them in, since more cooperative and palatable behaviour allows for them to improve their situation civilly.

Furthermore, such emotions, which are born from the innermost realms of the psyche, are not self-limiting. It requires decisive willed actions on the part of the conscious mind to tame them. Whether it is through meditation, counselling or even hypnosis, whatever it is that they need to do needs to be done because nothing good can come of such feelings.

## Ten of Swords



*“The stagnation of transformation. Total immobility of the chrysalis, which seems lifeless. Renewal sometimes requires great sacrifice. (Hieronymus Bosch).”*

This card illustrates a woman trapped in a sort of clam-shell flower. Branches pierce the lining, leading her to be completely immobilized.

Quite obviously this represents a feeling of entrapment, of incarceration. In the journey represented by the Swords, a

suit of action, this is a card which represents that the questioner has reached a point in their travels where there are no options left. They have been or have become, incarcerated. There is, in essence, nowhere left to go, no actions to take and neither any rivers to cross, nor any avenue to pursue.

In a way, this card echoes the Death of the Major Arcana. Unlike Death, however, the Ten of Swords concerns more the means by which the questioner must escape. Whereas Death represents the end of a journey but the natural, potentially positive, start of a new one, this is a card that neglects to say even that. It merely suggests it is the end; they are completely and utterly trapped in their predicament, whatever it may be – from relationships to careers.

So what advice can this card offer other than the depressing reality that it implies? Well, like the woman pictured, the only way to escape their prison is through radical and profound action. The woman here would need to sacrifice the sanctity of her body, figuratively or metaphorically, to break free. It would be something which would no doubt harm her in some way and. Likewise, the questioner should be encouraged to

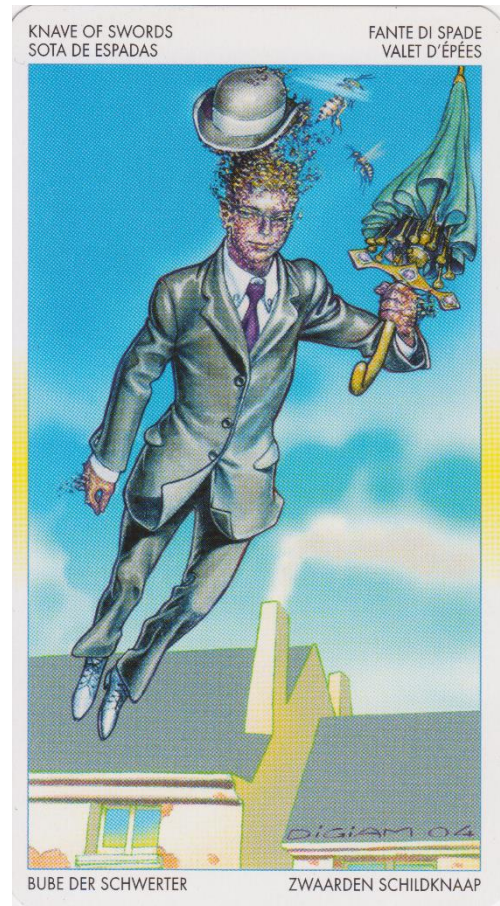


make drastic changes to their lives. This card indicates that it will not be a pleasant journey, but it is one that needs to be taken to achieve anything else meaningful with their lives.

To use an example, if they are distinctly unhappy in their job then this card tells us that they have no way out and that it won't change. The only action, therefore, would be to leave and jump into the unknown. By doing so, they could craft a new life for themselves. If they are in any way stuck in any dissatisfactory predicament, one that they desperately don't want to be in, then they need to sacrifice some part of their life, some part of themselves, so that they may make active and constructive modifications in the long run.

Whatever this card concerns, it is unfortunately not a positive revelation. After all, no one likes to be cornered. By way of other cards, however, they may be able to discover what radical change their life requires to break free from the psychologically and emotionally inhibiting deadlock.

## Knave of Swords



*“Future change, even simply of thought.  
(René Magritte)”*

This card shows a man floating off into the heavens. His mind is dissolving into the air. He is carrying an umbrella.

All in all, this is a somewhat abstract card which is indicative of someone who feels as though they are at the beginning of a journey. Whereas the Ace of Swords represents the desire to create, this card suggests more that the questioner simply has a psychological desire to



change, without perhaps knowing quite what direction they wish to take. Like the individual pictured, then, they are simply going where the wind takes them. Furthermore, they might not be correctly prepared for the next journey, like the man carrying an umbrella on a bright day, but they nonetheless wish to embark immediately.

In either case, this is a card that is representative of, again, change. How it will be achieved is unknown, but the questioner should feel confident in their abilities. After all, having willpower is half the battle when it comes to making modifications, and if they are passionate and steadfast they can achieve whatever this wish to with ease. It is a card that encourages the questioner to follow their thoughts and feelings and see where it takes them. They may find that, in time, they discover a steadier path that they wish to follow, but, for now, any new path is better than nothing. They should, therefore, allow themselves to be guided by their subconscious intuition – the psyche – and, if they do, it will ultimately lead to positive developments. All in all, a good card.

## Knight of Swords



*"The unconscious breaks into thoughts. Possibility of harnessing his strength and using it creatively. (Pinocchio – Collodi)"*

This is certainly an impressive card. In it, we see a big-eared, long-nosed wooden creature apparently wearing the body of a cow. His arms branch off into an abundance of twigs and leaves, and his feet are morphing into the earth becoming roots.

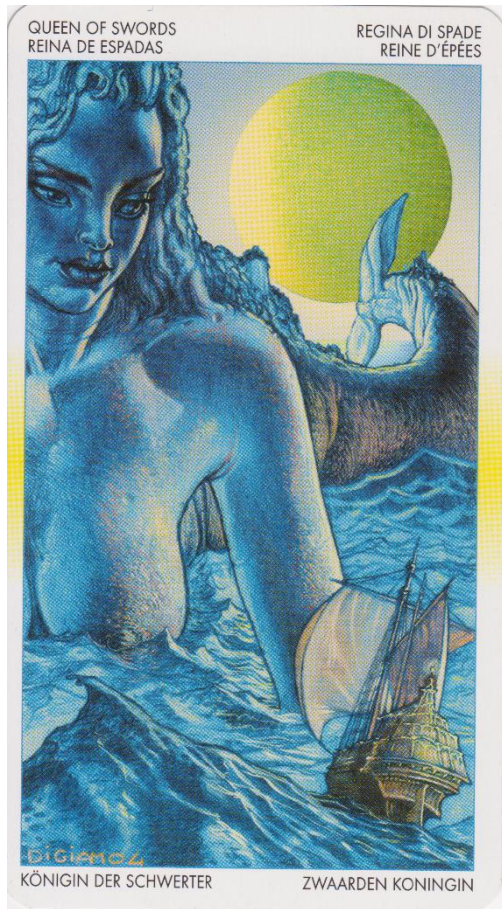
Relating this image to that of the story of Pinocchio we could argue that it represents either the deep-rooted habit of lying, or instead perhaps the willingness to lie to shape reality. It can serve as a warning, though, stating that its best not to get caught up in a web of lies lest you modify your circumstance in an ultimately undesirable way. The creature pictured presumably does not wish to turn into an Ent so it could easily indicate a loss of control surrounding a given circumstance.

It could also show a strong willingness or desire to hide behind a mask of lies, in much the same way that Pinocchio here wears the body of an animal that he is not. It shows, again, an eagerness to formulate devious arrays of lies to achieve a desirable, or undesirable, state. Unfortunately, this card illustrates that such concoctions may inevitably backfire and be “seen through” by others – in much the same way that Pinocchio’s blatant lies are indicated by the growth of his nose. Thus, it is a card of caution: beware of what fabrications you spin since they may be revealed as just that: falsities. It could indicate that what the questioner

thought was hidden was in fact out in the open.

Taking a step back and assuming that the questioner is not represented by Pinocchio, but instead is represented by his creator Collodi, then this card indicates that playing to one’s creative strengths will result in success and potential fame. It is a card about ignoring weaknesses and going full throttle into an endeavour which requires a skill that you are distinctly strong at. It is a card that “beefs up” your abilities and indicates that you should push forward to accomplish great things – setting the scene for you to take root in the fabric of reality and grow into something which will influence the world to come – for better or worse.

## Queen of Swords



*"Perceptive and complex woman, fit for directing changes in her favour. (Legend of the Siren)"*

There is perhaps no card with a more obvious meaning: "Beware the Siren". This is a card about sailing oblivious into the rocks. That things, although they may seem beautiful or grand, aren't quite what they appear – either now or in the future.

The seas pictured are rough which represents that the questioner has at

some point in their journey found themselves in a tough time. In such a time they may have compelled to take a path towards any glimmer of hope that appeared, but it should be mentioned that appearances can be deceiving – that they may, unfortunately, end up being hurt deeply.

No matter how strenuous their troubles they must not grasp at straws. The only way out of their struggle is to complete their journey; to continue through the stormy waves, no matter how high they rise. It is a card that represents the need for persistence and sturdiness in the face of difficulties.

In a more positive light, the questioner may, in fact, represent the siren herself. On one hand this can be seen as a good thing: they have the ability to shape and direct others for their benefit – they may be silver-tongued or possess a distinctly alluring beauty or skill. It is a card which represents the ability to get what they want when they want – drawing in others for their gain.

Conversely, it can indicate manipulation and dominance that will end poorly for those they control. i.e. that they are leading others down a path of

destruction. Thus, it can represent a need for self-control and the adoption of a more selfless or people orientated attitude. That is a need to use their magnetism for the benefit of others besides themselves.

It is worth noting that in the background of the image sits a planet, presumably Neptune – the Roman equivalent to Poseidon – the God of the Sea. This may indicate that others are standing by and watching the craziness as it unfolds. Alternately it could be that the situation is completely out of their control, that destruction is inevitable. Neptune creates the waves that drive the ship to seek refuge, after all.

Furthermore, it could mean that the siren is not quite as alluring as she thinks, rather she only draws people in because they are desperate. In much the same way, then, it could indicate that the questioner does not quite hold as much influence as they think they do, and rather that they are praying on the dark times of others to fulfil their wishes.

Going back to the ship, then, we can see that perhaps their troubles are caused by an external influence. To combat the

allure of the siren, they must, therefore, choose their battle with the proverbial Neptune – that of which is forcing them into a desperate and highly undesirable situation.



## King of Swords



*“Logical and powerful man. The constant tension that exists between abstract thought and action. (Hellequin, the prince of transformation.”*

On the *King of Swords* card, we see a blue-eyed, black masked figure wearing a wide brimmed purple hat. His clothing, below an elegant gold necklace, is constructed from the images of various worldly nobles – from the Georgian merchant to a Catholic crusader to a Roman legionnaire.

This card can represent any number of different concepts. On one hand it accounts for a loss of individuality, in that the pictured figure has become so influenced by what he has seen, done and heard that his consciousness has developed into an amalgamation of different individuals. In some respects, it is positive and represents a form of psychological plasticity that is open to change. It is indicative of a mind that can quickly unify experiences and can resolutely modify behaviour and habits.

Alternatively, such influences may have forcefully overcome his original personality with such vigour that there is now a disconnect between the internal and external self. He displays his knowledge and experiences openly, and yet hides behind a mask as if he is hesitant to let his real personality shine. In a way then this card can represent oppression by outside influences. If left unchecked this can lead to existential crises where the ego is torn apart and the bridge between the mind and body – the outside world – is broken. He would have, then, simply become an actor playing the part others want him to play, or that he thinks other want him to play. It represents courage and the

power to change at will, but also the fear or rejection or embarrassment – hence the mask. He has the strength to become whatever he wants to be but hides because he is afraid of becoming someone whom others may shun.

There is also an element of narcissistic chaos involved. With the knowledge of

how others look and act he can hide behind a mask and reap the benefits of deception and manipulation. Perhaps it is he who is the oppressive, ego-shattering individual, or instead, it possibly represents people in his life who acts to achieve goals at his detriment.